The PLAYERS GUIDE to the NEW COIN-OPS

electronic GAMES

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THE SECRETS OF THE TRACBALL

VIDEOGAMES MEET CABLE T.V.

HOW TO COLLECT COIN-OPS

ARCADING THROUGH EUROPE

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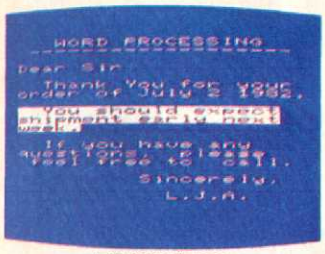
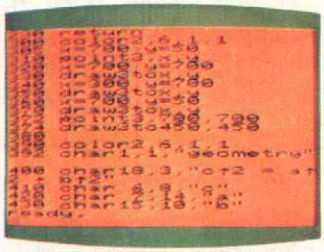
IF YOU OWN A COMMODORE COMPUTER, YOU KNOW IT CAN DO ALL THIS.


WORD PROCESSING
Dear Sir,
Thank you for your order of July 2 1982.
You should receive shipment early next week.
If you have any questions, please feel free to call.
Sincerely,
L.J.A.

BUSINESS

EDUCATION



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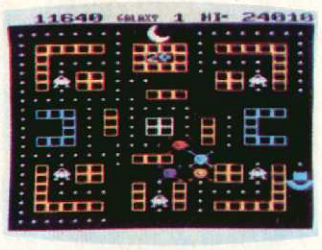
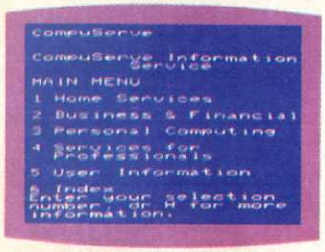
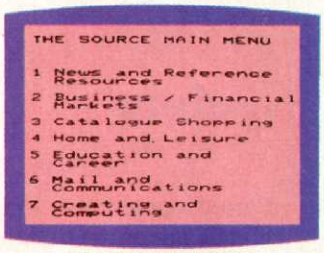


GAMES

BUT DID YOU KNOW FOR ABOUT $100, YOU CAN ALSO GET IT TO DO ALL THIS?



COMPU SERVE™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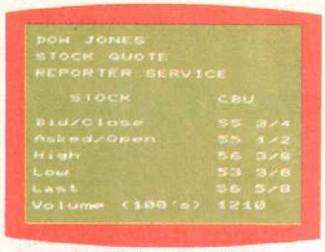
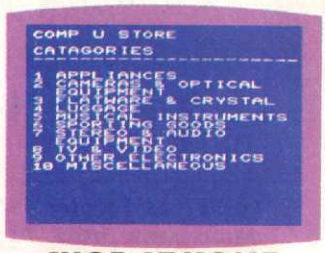
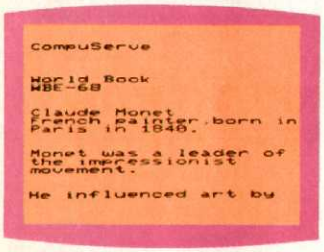


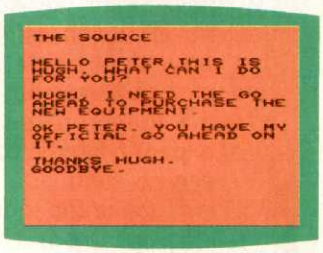
DOW JONES®



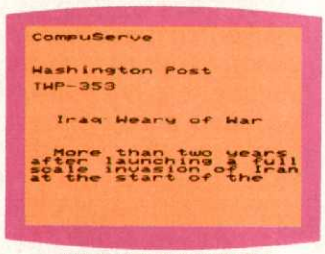
SHOP AT HOME



WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA


THE SOURCE
HELLO PETER, THIS IS HUGH. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
HUGH, I NEED THE GO AHEAD TO PURCHASE THE NEW EQUIPMENT.
OK PETER - YOU HAVE MY OFFICIAL GO AHEAD ON IT.
THANKS HUGH. GOODBYE.

ELECTRONIC MAIL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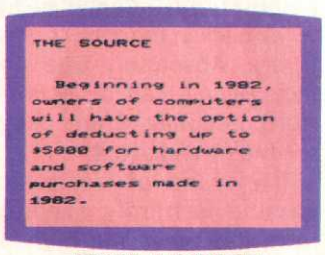
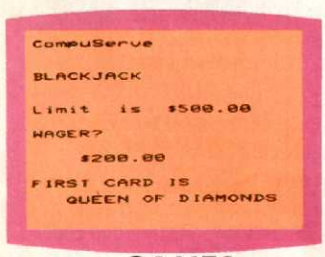
Washington Post
TWP-353
Iraq Weary of War
More than two years after launching full scale invasion of Iran at the start of the

WIRE SERVICE NEWS


THE SOURCE
Beginning in 1982, owners of computers will have the option of deducting up to $5000 for hardware and software purchases made in 1982.

TAX ADVICE



GAMES

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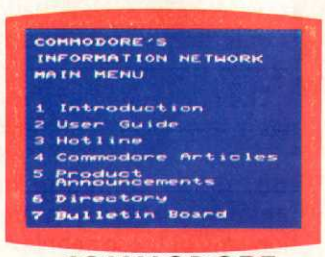
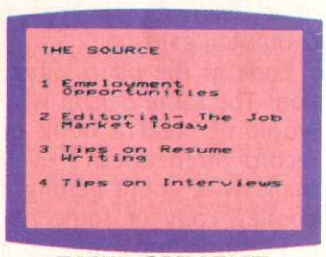
CHINA
November is the peak tourist season in China.
Hotel reservations, always difficult to obtain, are especially hard to come by during the high season and

TRAVEL INFORMATION



COMMODORE INFO. NETWORK



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The screens at the top of the page show a few examples of how versatile the VIC 20™ or Commodore 64™ can be with the addition of Commodore software.

The screens below them give you a few examples of how much more versatile they can be with the addition of a Commodore VICMODEM.

For around $100, the Commodore VICMODEM will turn your VIC 20 or Commodore 64 computer into a telecomputer.

To make matters even better, Commodore includes a few little extras (such as a free hour's time on the two most popular telecomputing services) that add up to a value of $197.50*. A nice return on an investment of about $100.

Most computer companies think it's reasonable to ask as much as $500 for a modem that'll give you telecomputing capabilities such as ours.

However, with a VICMODEM priced at around $100, we think we're being a lot more reasonable. Don't you agree?

commodore COMPUTER

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By ARNIE KATZ

Pirates and (Fellow) Travelers

People, as former TV game show host, Art Linkletter always used to assure the audience each week back in the 1950's, are funny. Absolutely true. In fact, people can be downright peculiar when they set their minds to it.

The world of electronic gaming is hardly exempt from this prevailing human condition. And nowhere is the oddness of arcaders more clearly evident than in computer gaming.

Look at the piracy situation. The same person who wouldn't steal a book or record often doesn't even think twice about getting a bootleg copy of some hot new game program from co-computerist Jolly Roger, who has broken the disk's protection code as an afternoon's recreation. Some retailers claim that this type of thievery can cut a new computer game's sales life on store shelves to a matter of weeks. After that, the number of unauthorized copies in circulation will grow large enough to seriously affect the legal market for the game.

One reason it's so hard to stop piracy of computer games is that, instance by instance, it doesn't look all that big or widespread to most people. This is in marked contrast to record piracy, a huge and profitable venture that often involves producing bogus record labels and album jackets to fool the consumer into thinking he has purchased the genuine article. More than one computer pirate has attempted to salve a conscience by saying that he is only duplicating disks for "a few friends".

The hitch is that everyone has a few friends, and each of them has a few friends, too. Once someone has breached the copy protection, any of these people can turn around and make a few more copies of any illegally duplicated game disk. So in dribs and drabs across the land, copies of each new game reach the playing public through what seems to amount to a loosely knit black market.

Why care? Well, let's start with simple ethics. An electronic game designer deserves the same respect and consideration accorded to those who create works of art for other media. Every pirated copy takes money directly out of the designer's pocket in the form of missed royalties. Since we don't treat novelists and painters that way, why single out computer game inventors?

In the long run, piracy curbs expansion in the computer game field. Outfits that don't make the money they expect from their wonderful new programs will tend to be less anxious to increase the number of titles in the future. Without the working capital which profits provide, it is very difficult for software producing firms to make the improvements in their product that they, and the videogaming public, would like to make.

Finally, by holding down unit sales of each individual title, piracy actually keeps software prices high. If the publishers could sell a legitimate disk for every one that now enters the market illegally, economies of scale in production and promotion would soon bring lower prices than we enjoy today.

So the next time a friend offers you a pirated game, think twice. In the long run, piracy hurts everyone, up to and including yourself.

Volume One, Number Fourteen
April, 1983

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HOW TO BEAT ANY VIDEO GAME SINGLE-HANDED.

WITH THE QUICK-SHOT™ JOYSTICK CONTROLLER

MODEL 318-101

FOR USE ON THE

- ATARI VCS SYSTEM
- SEARS VIDEO ARCADE
- VIC-20 COMPUTER
- ATARI 400 & 800 COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Beating any video game is easy, but beating it single handed takes a lot more. It takes a good joystick that is responsive and comfortable. Now with Spectravision's new Quick-Shot™ Joystick Controller, you can do it all single-handed; control and fire at the same time.

One look at the handle and you know you'll have a better grip on your game. It's contour design fits comfortably around your palm. You can play for hours without developing a case of sore thumb. The firepower button on top of the handle gives you that extra margin of speed. (We didn't call it Quick-Shot for nothing.) You also have the option to use the left hand fire button simultaneously. The four removable suction cups hold the entire joystick firmly on any surface. It also comes with a long cord.

With all those superior features in one joystick, you know you got yourself a winning combination. And when it comes to beating video games, one hand is all you need!

Get the Quick-Shot™ now, you'll be that much ahead. After all, winning is what every game is all about.

THE WINNING EDGE.

CONTOUR HANDLE AND RAPID FIRE BUTTON

OPTIONAL LEFT HAND FIRE BUTTON

UNIVERSAL JACK & LONG CORD

REMOVABLE SURE FOOT SUCTION CUPS

Quick Shot™

BY SPECTRAVISION™

39 W. 37th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018

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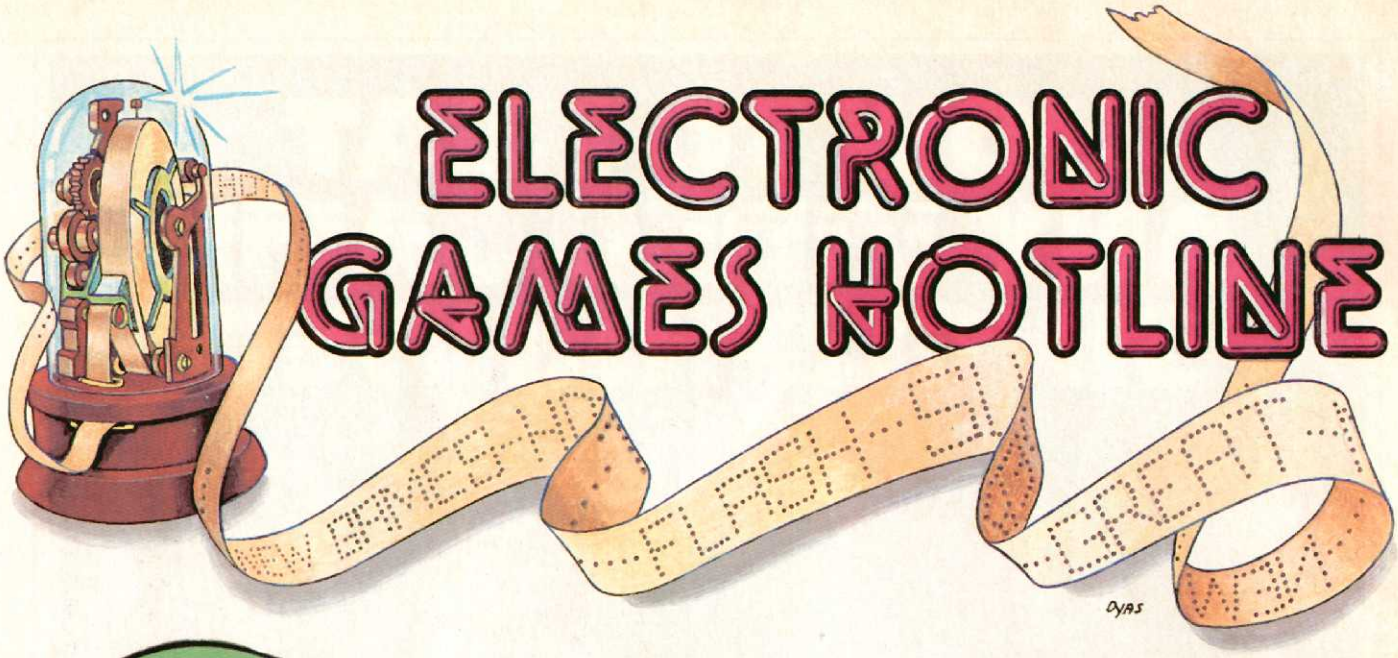

PARKER GRABS TWO HOT LICENSES

When Parker Brothers went shopping at the recently held A.M.O.A. (Amusement & Music Operators Association) convention and show, they weren't kidding around! The company picked up licenses for two hot coin-ops while attending.

Parker Brothers is now authorized to produce home versions of **Q*Bert**, the 3-D hit from Gottlieb, and **Popeye**, the coin-op co-creation of Nintendo and King Features. Both games should be introduced in home versions before the end of 1983.

INTELLIVISION'S KEYBOARD IS HERE!

Sound the trumpets, gamers! Intellivision's brand new computer keyboard is at last ready for release to the general public after extensive testing. The $150 unit is described as being capable of performing the functions of a home computer when attached to the Master Component console.

Plugged into the Intellivision, the keyboard and adaptor modules utilize built-in BASIC.

Test marketed for the past two years, the keyboard should be fully distributed by mid-'83.

In other Mattel news, the company is readying an impressive roster of all new hardware and software products. Check the May **EG** for the lowdown on goodies like the Intellivision 3.

YOUR FIRST MISTAKE IS YOUR LAST MISTAKE.

Don't dive your mini-sub into the dangerous waters of the **"BERMUDA TRIANGLE."©** This mysterious ocean graveyard offers a sea battle like no other you will ever wage. Giant squid, aquatic drones, man-eating sharks, enemy ships, vaporizing laser beams, exploding mines and Bermuda bombs are there to destroy you if you try to get away with the sunken city's buried treasure and priceless artifacts.

"BERMUDA TRIANGLE," a deadly new game from DATA AGE™, is designed for the ATARI® Video Game System and Sear's Tele-Games® Video Arcade™—and to get you into deep trouble.

Get 100,000 points and we'll send you a free secret manuscript about the **"BERMUDA TRIANGLE;"** get 500,000 points and receive a free replica artifact from the underwater city.

One last thing. Good luck. You're going to need it.

DATA AGE™

UP TO NOW, YOU'VE HAD IT EASY.

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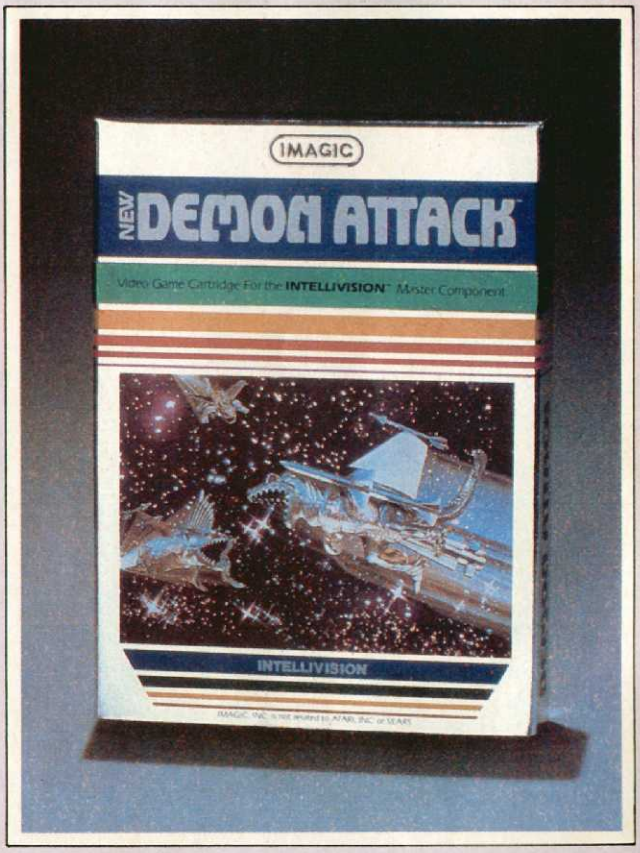
COLECO, ATARI CROSS SWORDS

Atari has entered suit against Coleco Industries for what it terms patent infringement and unfair competition. Atari seeks an injunction to halt the sale of Coleco's Expansion Module #1, which allows VCS-compatible cartridges to be played on the Coleco game unit. Atari is seeking damages from Coleco in the amount of $350 million.

Coleco has responded by filing a countersuit for $500 million, alleging violations of the Federal Antitrust statutes. Arnold Greenberg, president of Coleco, states, "Patent attorneys for Coleco have carefully examined all relevant Atari patents and are convinced that Coleco does not infringe any valid patent."

Greenberg went on to say that Coleco wasn't surprised by Atari's suit. "It's another example of Atari's effort to monopolize trade and commerce in the home video competition, and thus deprives retailers and consumers of the benefits of a fair and open competitive marketplace."



ATARI ATTACKS DEMON ATTACK

Atari has gone to court, filing a lawsuit against Imagic, claiming the Intellivision version of Imagic's Arkie-Award winning hit, **Demon Attack** infringes a copyright.

The folks in Sunnyvale aren't too happy, to say the least, because Atari holds the rights to **Phoenix** (Centuri), and says that *Demon Attack* is plagiarism of that game. The VCS-compatible version of *Demon Attack* is not believed to be at issue.

A spokesman for Imagic expressed confidence that Atari's case won't stand up, and denies the charges as being "completely without merit".

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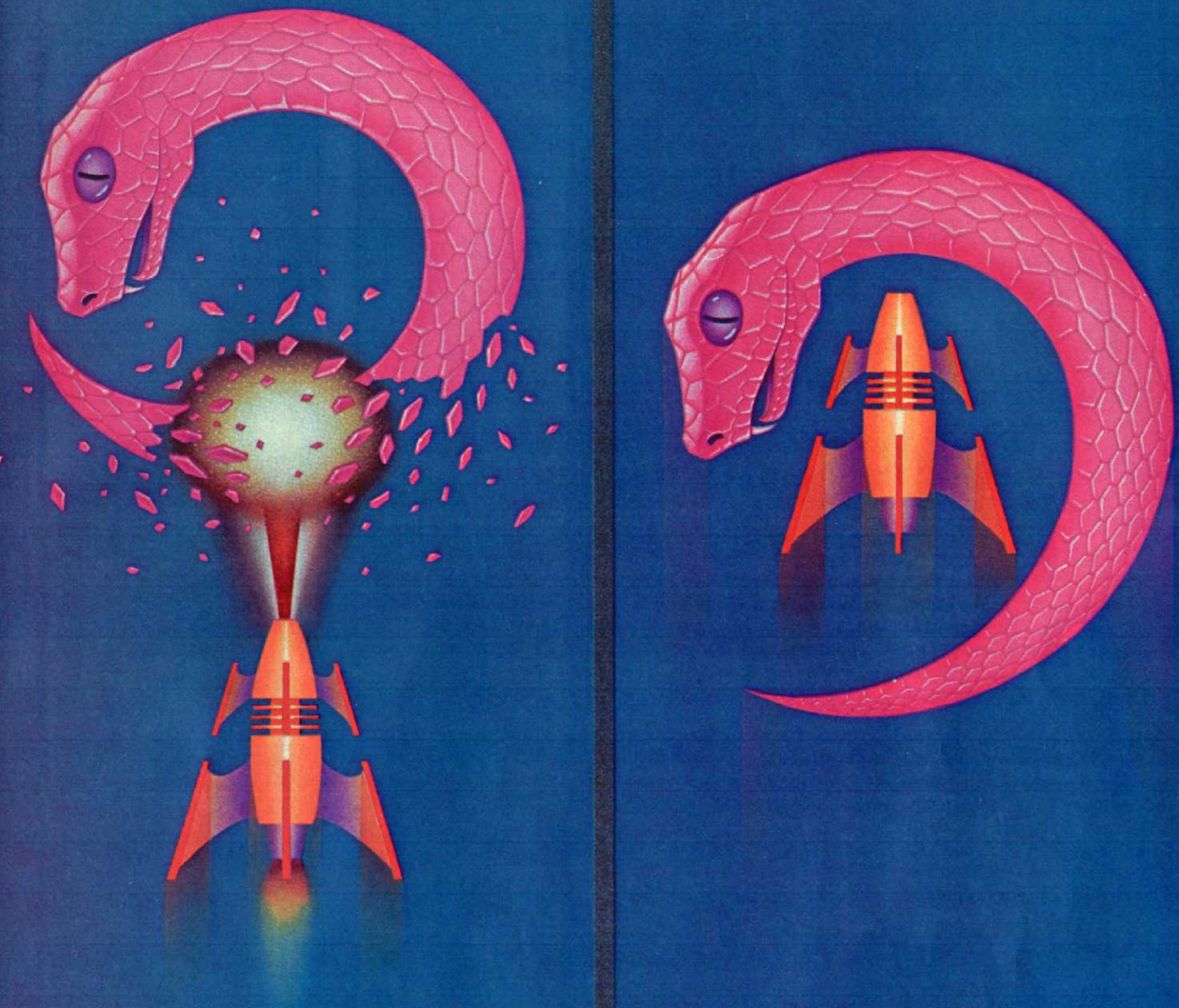


Which player is making a terrible mistake?

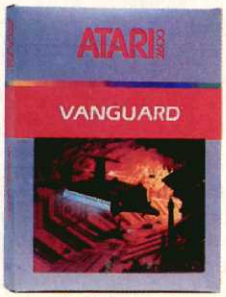
Time's up. Here comes Vanguard* from Atari®.

Vanguard is here with everything it has in the arcade. And it's only from Atari.

There are six dangerous tunnel zones. Lasers that fire in four directions. Map displays. Energy Pods. And, of course, Gond in the Mystery City.

Run out of lives and the game's not over. Continue, but only after you've forfeited your points.

And points can be hard to come by. Which may be the most important reason to find out which player in the example pictured above is making the mistake. The player on the left has destroyed a Kemlus snake in Rainbow Zone Three for 100 points. But the player on the right didn't make that mistake. He's docked with a Kemlus snake and is racking up over 1000 points.



So don't leave Vanguard in the store. It would be the biggest mistake of all.

ATARI®

A Warner Communications Company.

O² UPGRADES TO O³

The producers of the Odyssey² standard programmable videogame system, The Odyssey Division of North American Phillips, will release an upgraded version under the O³ name by mid- '83. The new system is both upwardly and downwardly compatible with the existing one, meaning carts produced for the O² will work in the O³ and vice versa. Even though a cartridge designed for the upgraded unit looks and plays better on the O³, O² owners can still expect to get the same quality carts they've been getting all along.

Among the O³'s advantages over its predecessor, improved graphics capabilities is most obvious. Increased screen RAM allows for games with much more intricately rendered backgrounds than could be provided with O² carts. (It's possible that **Pick-Axe-Pete**, among others, may be reissued in revised editions, presenting the O³ owner games with much more detailed graphics.

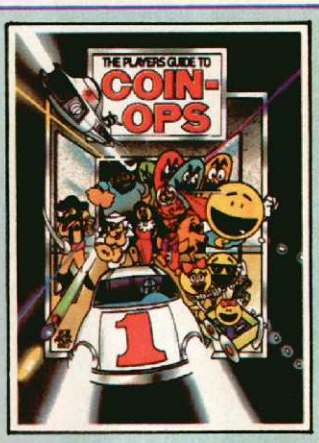
The O³ will also be much more compact than the present version. Like the O², it'll have the ability to interface with a speech synthesizer, but the add-on will be better off attached to the back panel, instead of on top of the unit.

The new system features the first full-sized keyboard with buttons (as opposed to the current monoplanar design) in the videogame industry.

INTRODUCING. . . THE FIRST LEGAL ENHANCEMENT

The videogame industry's first legal enhancement, is contained within the new coin-snatcher from Midway, **Pac-Man Plus.**

In this version, faster play-action isn't the only difference. The movement of the ghost monsters is now randomized to make the action more challenging. You may have had them running before, but now Inky, Blinky, Pinky and Clyde will have *you* on the run.



MASSACHUSETTS TOWN BANS GAMES!!!

An ordinance banning all videogames in Marshfield, MA was passed June 15. It specifically prohibits the use, operation and possession of commercial videogames. Any violators will be fined $200 for each offense.

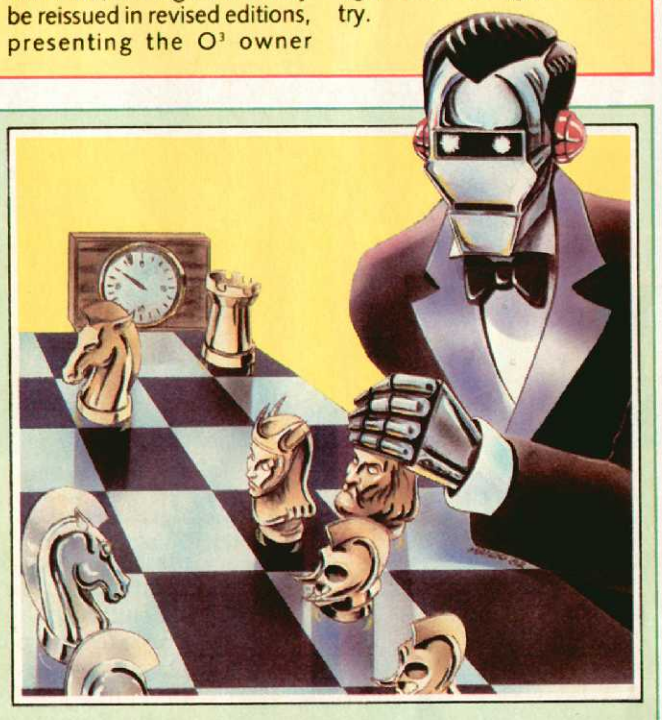
Since there *are* still a few people out there with reasonable attitudes toward the games, an appeal has been filed with the State Court of Appeals, claiming that the ordinance is unconstitutional, and stating the town has exceeded its authority in passing the law.

Although Plymouth District Court Judge Joseph Ford refused to grant a temporary restraining order to stop enforcement of the ban, local police agreed to ignore the new law until the court's rule on the appeal is handed down.

GRAND MASTER CHESS REALLY MOVES

Milton Bradley is on the brink of a new technological wonder, while simultaneously entering the computer chess field. Dubbed "Grand Master", MB's self-contained computerized chess game goes other programs one move better, by incorporating an assortment of features that makes computer contests even more rewarding for pawn-pushers.

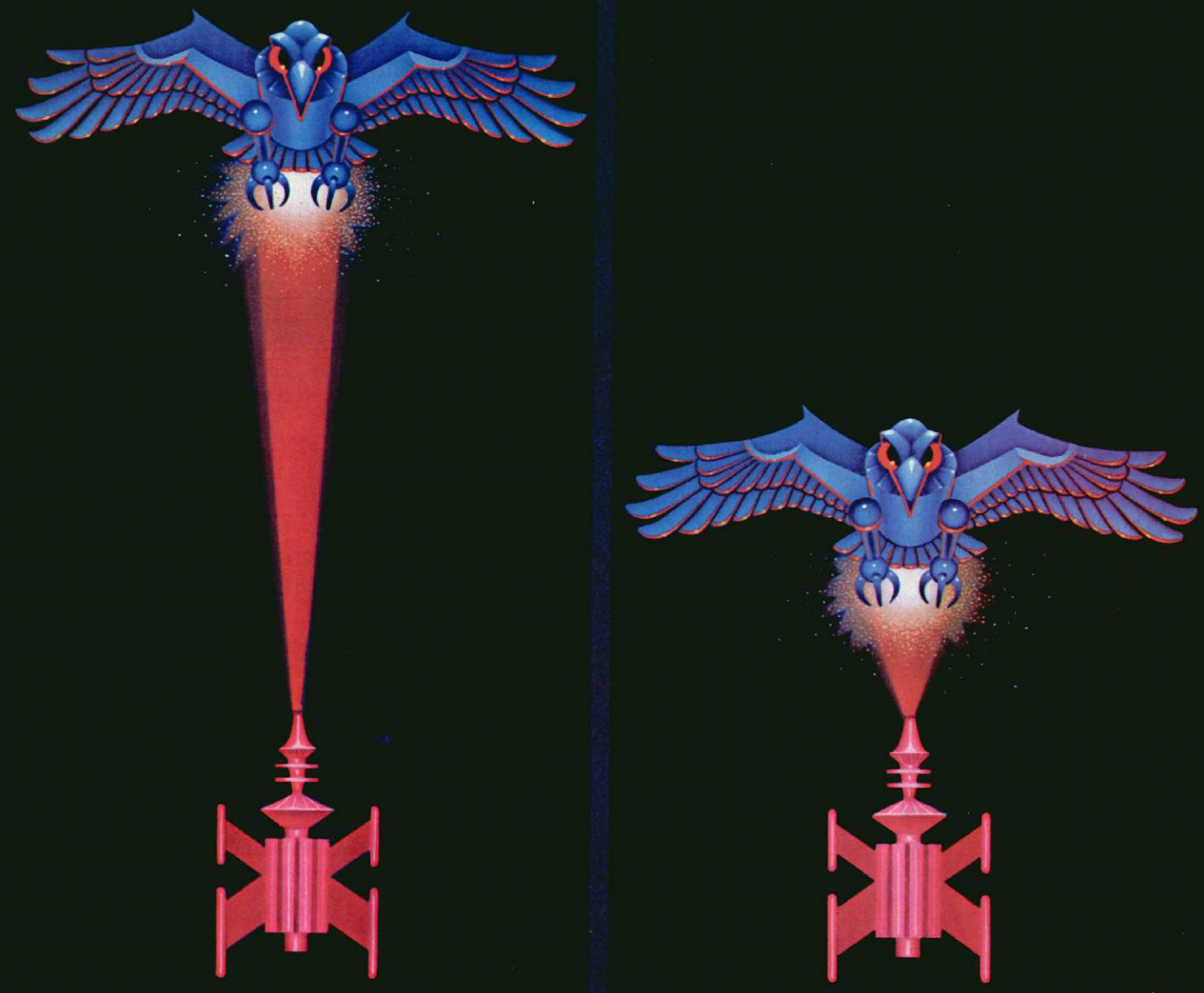
Featured are a variety of skill levels, and a selection of controls to make the game versatile enough for even ardent chessists. The best part is that the chess pieces actually move themselves across the board, with no assistance from the gamer!



The entire contest can be played to mate without even a touch of the human hand.

This is the first robot player that has attained full U.S. distribution.

© 1983 Atari, Inc. All rights reserved. *Trademark licensed by Centuri, Inc. † Trademark of Sears, Roebuck and Co.



Which player's score is about to take flight?

Quick, figure it out. Here comes Phoenix* from Atari.

Duck. Here comes Phoenix. The famous arcade sensation that's now a home sensation. And it's only from Atari for use with the ATARI® 2600™ and Sears Video Arcade† systems.

This is a spectacular arcade replica. With four waves of awesome warbirds. Flapping wings that grow back seconds after you shoot them off. And even a forcefield.

But in Phoenix you can't just wing it. You can't shoot like the player on the left. Because he'll get only 100 points for a bird high in the sky. While the player on the right will shoot the same bird low in the sky for 500 points. And a feather in his cap.

So whether you aim high or low, aim to get Phoenix home. Any other idea is for the birds.

ATARI

A Warner Communications Company.

THE NATIONAL VANITY BOARD

Today's Top Coin-op Scores

Electronic Games is proud to announce the creation of the National Vanity Board to identify and honor the nation's arcade aces. Just as the **Electronic Games'** National Home Arcade salutes the achievements of the lords and ladies of livingroom gaming, the National Vanity Board will monitor the triumphs of the kings and queens of the coin-op videogaming world.

EG will update the listings each month based on information provided by game manufacturers, arcade operators and, most importantly, our hundreds of thousands of readers. If you or one of your buddies rewrites the record book for the most popular commercial arcade machines, getting the proper recognition for the new champ is as easy as following these three steps:

1. Set the record.
2. Show the arcade manager on duty your record score and have him (or her) sign the proper portion of the report form—copies or facsimiles are fine.
3. Mail your score report to: Electronic Games, 235 Park Avenue South, Sixth Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Score Report Form

Name of Player (Please Print)

_____

Player's Address _____

_____

Name of Game _____

Score _____

Name of Arcade _____

Arcade Address _____

_____

Arcade Operator's Signature _____

Here Are the Arcaders to Beat!

Battlezone (Atari)
Dennis Hranitzky
Grapevine, TX
Record: 9,600,500

Missile Command (Atari)
Joe Fernandes
Artesia, CA
Record: 52,246,260

Centipede (Atari)
Darren Olson
Calgary, Canada
Record: 15,207,353

Donkey Kong, Jr. (Nintendo)
Tim Hold
Milwaukee, WI
Record: 430,600

Crazy Climber (Nichibutsu)
Mark Benzie
Fort Royal, VA
Record: 856,250

Defender (Williams)
Marvin Norton
Safford, AZ
Record: 49,367,750

Pac-Man (Midway)
Dave Marsden
Santo, TX
Record: 14,880,210

Scramble (Stern)
Jason Itzler
Cliffside Park, NJ
Record: 8,410,500

Phoenix (Centuri)
Jim Barnett
Philadelphia, PA
Record: 786,904

Astro Blaster (Sega/Gremlin)
Eron Foote
Spokane, WA
Record: 101,450

Gorf (Midway)
Jim Hart
Jacksonville, NC
Record: 1,237,500

Dig-Dug (Atari)
Dwayne Lindsey
Redding, CA
Record: 3,499,010

Donkey Kong (Nintendo)
Bill Schenley
Ocean Grove, NJ
Record: 11,800,300

Frenzy (Stern)
Jim Howell
McHenry, IL
Record: 1,914,777

Frogger (Sega/Gremlin)
Dave Marsden
Santo, TX
Record: 2,400,050

Galaga (Midway)
Jack Pardo
Lansing, MI
Record: 9,635,070

Omega Race (Midway)
Gary Buchanan
Brentwood, TN
Record: 1,960,400

Stargate (Williams)
Mike McCrary
Albuquerque, NM
Record: 64,830,268

Robotron (Williams)
Ken Vance
Las Vegas, NV
Record: 200,257,350

Tempest (Atari)
Ken Vance
Las Vegas, NV
Record: 4,999,993

Vanguard (Centuri)
Guillermo Toro
Caba Rojo, PR
Record: 2,238,220

Wizard of Wor (Midway)
Johnny Thatch
Marietta, GA
Record: 398,000

Zaxxon (Sega/Gremlin)
Tim Williams
Climax, NC
Record: 2,136,200

Tron (Midway)
Rob Ankrom
Beaverton, OR
Record: 1,922,563

Solar Fox (Midway)
Rick McClellan
Columbus, OH
Record: 221,110

Thief (Pacific Novelty)
John Carver
Holly Hill, FL
Record: 389,890

Kick-Man (Midway)
Rich Turkishev
Manitov Springs, CO
Record: 4,429,555

Kangaroo (Atari)
Francis Haggerty
Cresskill, NJ
Record: 162,400

Looping (Venture Line)
Wade Wittmer
Topeka, KS
Record: 554,050

Space Firebird (Sega/Gremlin)
Bobby Henderson
Belle Chasse, LA
Record: 128,520

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Which player is heading for victory?

Better find out. Here comes Centipede™ from Atari.

Look out. Centipede's escaping from the arcade. Grabbing every great arcade feature it can. And it's only from Atari, for use with the ATARI® 2600,™ Sears Video Arcade† systems, and the ATARI 5200™ SuperSystem.

There's the same relentless attack of centipedes, scorpions, fleas, and spiders. A mushroom garden. Changing screen colors with each new centipede. And each new one gets faster. So points get tougher.

And if it's points you want, you can get 10 times more by shooting for the head. Like the player on the right. He's about to hit the head for 100 points. But the player on the left is about to hit a body segment for a measly 10 points. A cheap shot.

So don't let Centipede get away. That wouldn't be using your head.

ATARI®

A Warner Communications Company.

★ THE NATIONAL ★

ARCADE SCOREBOARD

THE BEST SCORES FOR POPULAR VIDEOGAMES

Photos of readers' best scores are really pouring into the offices of **Electronic Games**, and the competition among the land's arcade aces is even keener than expected. There are plenty of top players out there, and the rankings listed here show that they're hitting the joystick hot and heavy in a bid for national recognition.

The scores tabulated here reflect the first group of games which the editors of **EG** selected to kick off this continuing compilation of home videogaming records. We'll be adding more games and updating their scores each month, a few at a time, until we're covering most of what's hot.

To have your gaming achievements recognized in the National Arcade Scoreboard, all you've got to do is follow a few simple rules:

1. Every score must be accompanied by a photograph of the TV screen showing the score. These photos do not have to be of publishable quality, just readable by our judges.
2. All photographs received become the property of **Electronic Games** and none can be returned.
3. Be sure to include your complete name and address. (We will print only the name and city in the magazine, but we may want to contact high scorers for helpful gaming hints.)

Games currently eligible for the National Arcade Scoreboard are:

★ **UFO** (Odyssey) — Game #1
★ **Asteroids** (Atari VCS) — Game #6
★ **Grand Prix** (Activision)—Course #4
★ **USAC Auto Racing** (Mattel) — Course #1
★ **Spacechase** (Apollo) — Game #1
★ **Defender** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
★ **The Incredible Wizard** (Astrocade) (one player, easy difficulty)
★ **Space Hawk** (Mattel) — Game #1 (auto-fire, if desired)

THE HONOR ROLL

UFO/Odyssey/Odyssey ²/Game #1
1. **1,872** — Bill Simsalek, Cleveland, OH
2. **1,674** — Mark Hansen, Toronto, Ontario
3. **1,636** — Lee Raymond, no address given

Asteroids/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #6
1. **199,990** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI
2. **195,310** — Bob Clarke, Racine, WI
3. **129,460** — Bob Prindle, Erie, PA

Grand Prix/Activision/Atari VCS/Course #4
1. **1:35:41** — Mike Ratledge, Charleston, SC
2. **1:36:69** — John Larem, Palos Heights, IL
3. **1:36:73** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI

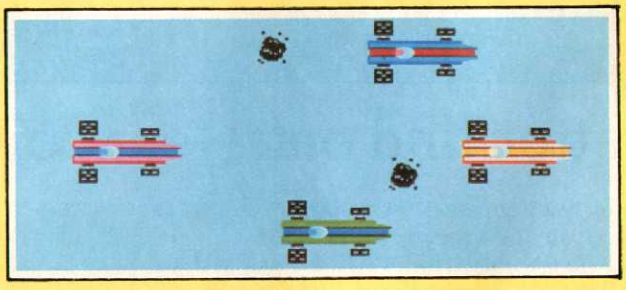
USAC Auto Racing/ Mattel/Intellivision/ Course #1
1. **2:49** — John Malley, Aurora, IL
2. **2:52** — Ken Barley, Canby, OR

Spacechase/Apollo/Atari VCS/Game #1
1. **185,075** — Tom Garcia, Whittier, CA
2. **93,300** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI
3. **45,500** — Adam Krlic, Medford Lakes, NJ

Defender/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #1
1. **4,717,850** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI
2. **4,183,500** — Charles Own Jr., Little Rock, AR
3. **2,002,850** — Art Childs, Gaylor, MI

The Incredible Wizard/Astrocade/Astrocade
1. **130,510** — Bob Mirsch, Warren, MI
2. **115,050** — Kark Wolski, Glen Ellyn, IL
3. **99,990** — Swain Valasek, Tampa, FL

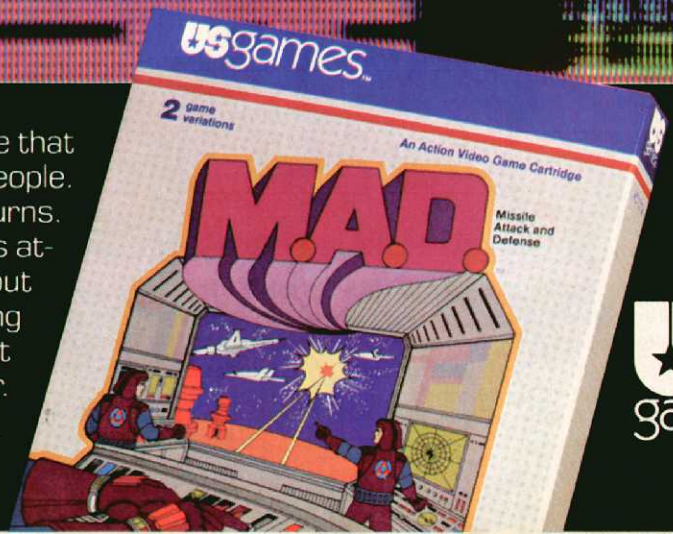
Space Hawk/Mattel/Intellivision/ Game #1
1. **10,305,220** — John Malley, Aurora, IL
2. **10,142,040** — Luc LaBelle, Manitoba, Canada
3. **5,130,660** — Steve Connelly, Boone, NC



GO ONE-ON-ONE.
MAN-TO-MAN.
NON-STOP.
TRIGGER MISSILES.
FIRE CANNON.
ATTACK.
ESCAPE. EXPLODE.
DEFEND. DESTROY.
GO
M.A.D.

©1983 U.S. Games Corporation
A Subsidiary of The Quaker Oats Company

M.A.D. is the combat game that works like real combat: Two people. Head-to-head. At the same time. No waiting turns. Your evil opponent launches attack missiles. You blast them out of the sky, then try your hand at being bad guy while he defends. It's constant action, no playing benchwarmer. One and two-player programs, it's M.A.D.



US games

E.G. READERS PICK THEIR FAVORITE GAMES

☆Most Popular Videogame Cartridges☆

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Game	System	Manufacturer
1	1	Pitfall	Atari 2600	Activision
2	2	Donkey Kong	ColecoVision	Coleco
3	—	Ladybug	ColecoVision	Coleco
4	12	Venture	ColecoVision	Coleco
5	—	Defender	Atari 2600	Atari
6	3	Donkey Kong	Atari 2600	Coleco
7	8	Zaxxon	ColecoVision	Coleco
8	5	Demon Attack	Atari 2600	Imagic
9	—	Megamania	Atari 2600	Activision
10	—	E.T.	Atari 2600	Atari
11	10	Berzerk	Atari 2600	Atari
12	—	Raiders of the Lost Ark	Atari 2600	Atari
13	14	Star Master	Atari 2600	Activision
14	—	Turbo	ColecoVision	Coleco
15	6	Frogger	Atari 2600	Parker Brothers

☆Most Popular Computer Programs☆

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Game	System	Manufacturer
1	2	Pac-Man	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
2	1	Star Raiders	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
3	8	Centipede	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
4	3	Castle Wolfenstein	Atari 400-800-1200, Apple II	Muse
5	5	Choplifter	Atari 400-800-1200, Apple II	Broderbund
6	—	Protector II	Atari 400-800-1200	Synapse
7	—	Gorf	VIC-20	Commodore
8	7	Missile Command	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
9	4	Jawbreaker	Atari 400-800-1200	Sierra On-Line
10	—	Frogger	Atari 400-800-1200	Sierra On-Line

☆Most Popular Coin-Op Videogames☆

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Game	Manufacturer
1	1	Donkey Kong	Nintendo
2	2	Tron	Bally/Midway
3	3	Zaxxon	Sega
4	5	Dig-Dug	Atari
5	10	Donkey Kong, Jr.	Nintendo
6	4	Ms. Pac-Man	Bally/Midway
7	6	Robotron	Williams
8	—	Tempest	Atari
9	9	Joust	Williams
10	—	Centipede	Atari

Readers Choose Top Games

Since mere *quantity* of play doesn't necessarily equal actual popularity, **Electronic Games** bases its standings on the votes of its readers. These lists of most popular games are based on the more than 1000 Reader Polls. We update the "picked hits" lists in every issue of **Electronic Games.** So send in your votes!

EG HOSTS EXEC ROUND TABLE

Several leading hardware and software publishing executives *and* heavyweights from the business journalism world joined together for the first annual Executive Roundtable of the Electronic Gaming Industry. Sponsored by **Electronic Games** magazine, this strictly off-the-record session was conducted over dinner at New York City's fabulous Windows on the World restaurant, atop of the World Trade Center.

Representing some of the giants in the industry were: Arnold Greenberg, president of Coleco, Bill Grubb, president of Imagic, Rich Sterns, vice president of Parker Brothers, and Dave Gordon, president of Datamost.

TV GAME SHOW VIDEOGAMES

The Great Game Company is designing and marketing a line of cartridges for the Atari VCS, based upon popular TV game shows. The Great Game Company operates as a division of I.J.E. Distributing, owners of the Kid Stuff Record Label (the second largest children's record company).

The first six games are electronic versions of "Family Feud", "Jeopardy", "Password", "Tic-Tac-Dough", "Joker's Wild" and "Wheel of Fortune".

H. Michael Sisson, vice president of advertising and marketing, reports that licensing arrangements for even more popular game shows are currently being negotiated, which will result in forthcoming titles for all anxious game show gaming fans.

World's Largest Selection of Commercial and Home Video Games and Accessories.

WE HAVE EVERY CARTRIDGE & ACCESSORY FOR ATARI® VIDEO COMPUTER SYSTEM™, 400™/800™, 5200™, INTELLIVISION™, COLECOVISION™ & VECTREX™

Send $2.00 for our latest Catalog & Newsletter telling about all the new and exciting products shown at the January '83 Consumer Electronics Show! Please specify if you have an Atari 400/800 unit, and we will send you our Atari 400/800 Catalog.

ACCESSORIES FOR MATTEL™ INTELLIVISION™ UNIT

(Not for use with Intellivision™ II or III)

Joystick **14.95/set†**
Precision machined from aluminum (gold anodized) for the most discriminating player. Includes 2 replacement disks with screw-in straight stick and ball handles.

Distick™ **10.00/pair†**
Replacement joysticks for Intellivision™ made from hi-impact plastic.

Intellivision™ Dust Cover **7.95†**
Heavy vinyl with logo.

ALL MAIL ORDER COMPANIES ARE NOT THE SAME!

1. We've been in business for over 10 years.
2. We operate 4 stores as well as our mail order business.
3. We stock over $1,000,000 in inventory.
4. We ship over 90% of our orders within 48 hours.
5. We have the most sophisticated computer system in the industry.
6. We have nationwide toll free 800 lines to take your orders (Visa or MasterCard).
7. We will ship any way you prefer.
8. We will immediately replace initial defects.

California residents add 6-1/2% sales tax.
*Add $1 packing, handling and shipping charge.
†Add $2 packing, handling and shipping charge.
‡Add $3 packing, handling and shipping charge.

ACCESSORIES FOR ATARI® VCS & ATARI® 400™/800™

G.A.M.E.S.™ Super Joystick **29.95†**
Finest quality, 5-year mfr's. warranty.

Joystick Extension Cord **(6 ft.) 4.95*** **(12 ft.) 6.95***
6-wire cable.

Joystick "Y" Adapter **6.95***
Allows joystick & paddles to remain connected, saving wear and tear on connector pins.

Joystick Lefty Adapter **5.95***
Allows Atari® joystick to be turned 90° for left handed persons.

Supercharger™ by Starpath™ **39.95†**
Regularly 69.95. With Phaser Patrol™ Tape (increase memory of Atari® VCS).

Emerson™ AC/DC Cassette Recorder **24.95‡**
Regularly 49.95.

Atari® Dust Covers **7.95†**
For 2600, 400, 800 & 5200 models. All heavy vinyl with logo.

ACCESSORIES FOR COLECOVISION™

Superjoystick™ with 2 Fire Buttons **29.95†**
This is the same quality joystick we've been selling for Atari® 5 year mfr's. warranty.

Ball Handle (EZ Joystick) **10.00/pr.†**
For Coleco™

Joystick "Y" Adapter **10.00/pr.†**
Allows use of G.A.M.E.S.™ superjoystick with standard Coleco™ controller's 9-wire cable.

Controller Extension Cord
9-wire cable. **(9 ft.) 10.00†**

Colecovision™ Dust Cover **7.95†**
Heavy vinyl with logo.

Visa and **MasterCard** holders may call **to place orders: 1-800-626-9592.**
NO C.O.D. ORDERS.
(Dealer inquiries welcome.)

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2020 Avenue of the Stars,
Plaza Level, Los Angeles, CA
(213) 203-8433

For **information** call: **1-213-781-1300**
(Mon.-Fri. 9-6 PST / Sat. 9-5 PST)

PAC-MAN INVADES GERMANY

Pac-Man currently reigns as the biggest thing to hit West Germany since the Olympics. It's estimated by happy burgermeisters that over 230,000 of the Atari carts have been sold in '82, and a gross take-out from Germany is estimated at $50 million. Atari foresees the gross increasing to about $70 million in '83.

Home videogame carts retail from $40 to $60 in Germany, where entire families are said to be partaking the gaming craze.

HAVE A COKE AND A GAME

Coca-Cola will soon introduce a new line of vending machines that offers special options designed to attract customers. Gamers will be happy to hear said options feature a small-screen videogame just above the coin slot. Buy yourself a Coke and get a free game along with it. Not bad.

There are currently two gaming options being offered to Coke bottlers. The first game makes the player a delivery man who must catch falling pop bottles thrown at him by a monkey hanging from a palm tree. The second involves players' concentration as they line up and stop moving letters to spell the familiar beverage's name.

Brian Dyson, president of Coke USA, says the games are "interesting and intriguing", but goes on to warn that "if the games don't attract business, they won't be around very long."

HOSPITAL HOLDS VIDEOGAME DAY

A videogame club in East Detroit, MI, The Activision Addicts, recently sponsored a "Hospital Video Game Day" in the Bi-County Hospital's children's ward located in Warren, MI.

The club got some help from Atari, Activision, Games by Apollo, and Imagic, all of which contributed prizes to the festivities. An Atari VCS unit was donated to the hospital's play room, and involved a dozen kids who participated in the event, assisted by six club members.

The Addict's President, Ernest Sevener, reports that the event was so well received and so well appreciated that the club plans even more "Video Days" during the upcoming months.

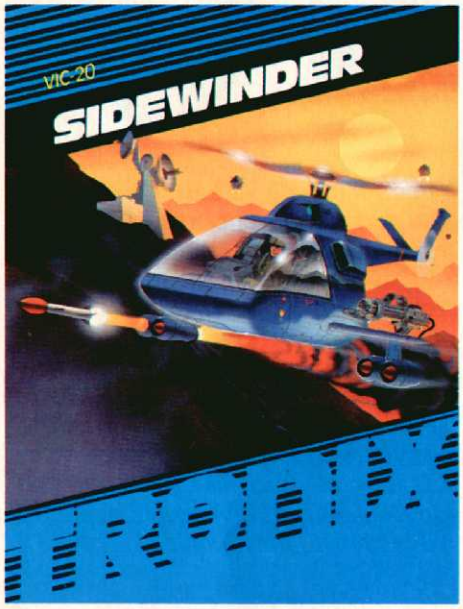
PRESTIGE CHALLENGER BREAKING NEW GROUND

Fidelity Electronics "Prestige Challenger" rated extremely high in the U.S. Open Chess Championship, held in St. Paul, MN, by defeating a Candidate Master with a score of 2016!

This big win served to put the program securely into the "expert" category of chess-player, which is a first for *any* microcomputer game .

The way these chess machines are improving, it may soon take a chess computer to beat another machine.

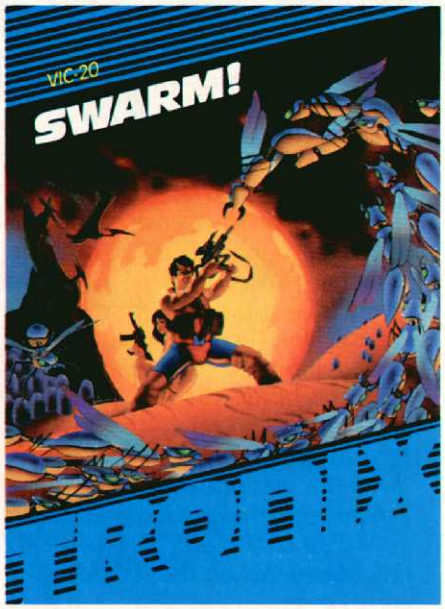
THE ULTIMATE IN FAST ACTION FOR YOUR VIC-20.



Dive Into a Fearsome Fight!

Grab your gloves, survival pack and head-gear! Your Sidewinder commandos are whooshing off into the most frenzied fight in the far side of the galaxy! You've got to out-maneuver deadly Battle pods, dodge destructive Stalker bombs and go head-to-head with alien Oblitojets... all at speeds you wouldn't imagine possible!

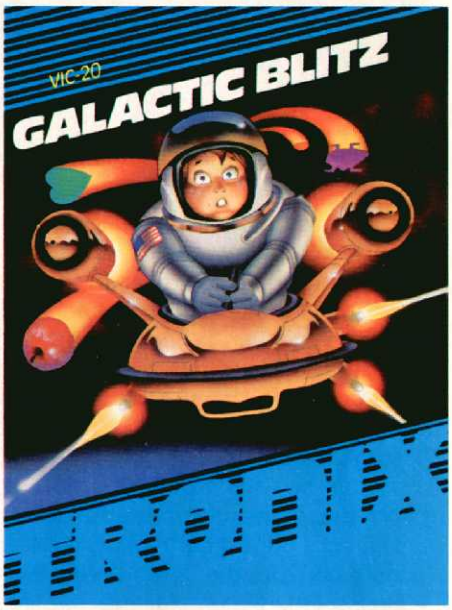
Suggested Retail Price $29.95



Blast An Insect Invasion!

Dive into the most awesome all-out battle ever! You'll be attacked from all directions by a barrage of deadly android wasps and alien creatures like you've never encountered before! Any contact means instant destruction! If it's not the fastest game you've ever played, you're from another planet.

Suggested Retail Price $29.95



Attack Crazy Aliens!

Fall back into the far fields of the galaxy! That bumbling formation coming at you is the crazy Galactic Blitz. These aliens have 15 different play patterns. And each time you take one out of the game they come back mad as ever! So go for the galactic score full speed ahead! If you're merely a spectator, find another sport.

Suggested Retail Price $24.95

Dealer inquiries invited. Tronix games are available at your local store, or direct from us. Send a check or money order to Tronix Publishing, Inc., 701 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90301.

VIC-20™ is a trademark of Commodore Electronics Limited.

COVERING EG

Electronic Games has had a series of very appealing covers and interior artwork right from the start. It looked good, it looked professional and it looked exciting. Whoever put the concepts and cover designs together is a genius, but the October issue was okay, color-wise—only there were some problems. The colors inside the middle box were dull; the red "egg" on the cover clutters and detracts. Having a photograph on the cover also detracts from the "mood" of previous issues. I'm not complaining, but I really like **EG** and I've seen a lot of other attempts at similar magazines but nobody else has done it right or put the effort into it that you have.

I want to make sure **EG** gets all the support it needs. I have no doubt **EG** will survive and grow where other magazines will die out.

I own an Apple II + and bought it solely for games — since its incredible software supply makes it a gamer's dream. I was glad to see your most recent issue run an article on the Apple system. I feel the same about the Apple as I do about **EG**: the more support it gets, the better the end product will be.

Ed: Unfortunately, the final page of this letter was not enclosed in the envelope so we have no way of knowing how it all comes out. But we've got a few comments on the subject of covers.

We really try to make sure that no two issues of **EG** *have similar covers. The concepts are plotted by the editors and coordinated, laid-out and coated with magic dust by our very own design genius and winner of this year's in-house "Arky" for lay-out above and beyond the call of duty —Ben Harvey. Single-handedly, Ben puts together the magnificent package* **EG** *presents each month.*

If we don't entirely succeed with each cover, let us know. We'd love more feedback from our readers on both our covers and the interior art — what you like and what you'd prefer to see changed. In terms of our graphics, we've always held to one rule: Make **EG** *look as much like the games as possible. In fact, if we could make the pages move, they would.*

PLAYERS GUIDE TO ELECTRONIC FOOTBALL GAMES
electronic GAMES
Videogames · Computer Games · Stand-Alone Games · Arcades
EG'S 1983 VIDEOGAME PREVIEW
Customize Your Coleco Pac-Man
Videogame Hall of Fame
HOME 28 :00
4TH 01:12

The PLAYER'S GUIDE to CLIMBING GAMES
electronic GAMES
Videogames · Computer Games · Stand-Alone Games · Arcades
Presenting... The BEST Electronic Games In The World:
THE 1983 ARCADE AWARDS
Inside the Newest "Third Wave" Videogame System: THE ATARI 5200
PLUS: Reviews And Strategies For Today's Hottest New Games!

Two of our most popular covers demonstrate the wide variety of cover art used in EG

THE VANISHING PLAYLAND

I've noticed lately that your "Computer Playland" section has slowly been diminishing. Could you tell me why?

Stephen Ciaglia
Scotch Plains, NJ

Ed: As a matter of fact, Stephen, "Computer Playland" has vanished completely —in favor of our expanded "Computer Gaming" section. It just happened that you caught an issue in which we tried to cover some of the exploding programmable videogame software, and space for that came at the expense, temporarily, of our computer software reviews.

We at **EG** *feel that, within five years, computers will have penetrated into the market to an astonishing degree, and one of the mainstays of the personal computer will always be games, art, music and other forms of electronic delight. So you can expect to see those computer review sections swell as the months pass!*

EG, CALL HOME

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magazine from a friend who loaned me his copy — how do I get my own?

John Ingram
Wilmington, N.C.

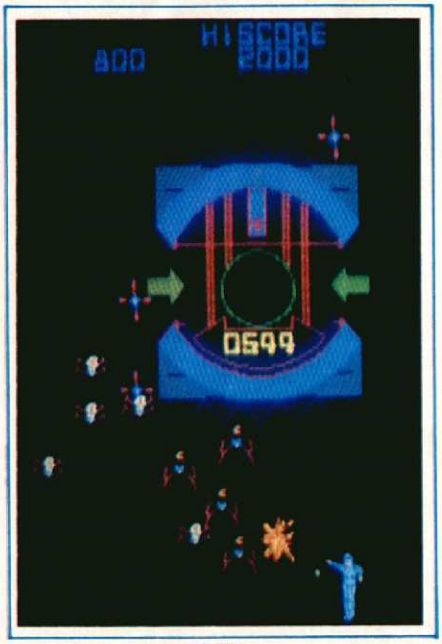
Ed: Besides subscribing for a total of 12 issues at $28, there are several alternatives. **EG** *periodically runs lists of all specialty stores selling more than 25 copies a month. The other way to go about it — a method that will enternally endear you to our circulation department, is to go to your nearest newsstand and demand a copy. If he's all out, suggest he get more next month. If he doesn't carry it — the villain — set him straight on where the electronic gaming action is really happening — EG magazine!*

TOP SCORES — OLD GAMES

In **EG**, you are always telling us about the latest games — so why don't you list high scores on those new games (**Dig-Dug, Kangaroo, Tron,** etc.)?

David Bard
Brooklyn, NY

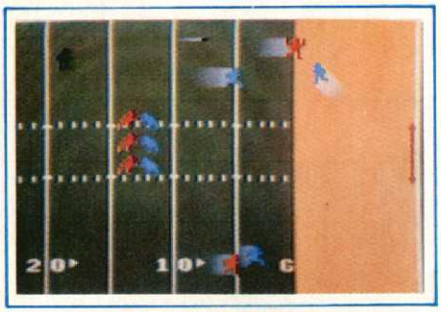
Ed: We are constantly updating our scoreboards and Vanity Boards — witness the inclusion of **Tron** *and* **Kangaroo** *for example. But we also like to give players time to become acquainted with the new titles, learn the ropes, and flip over those digits like Pete Townsend's fingers gliding over a Fender fretboard.*



TRON

SPORTS-LOVERS LAMENT

I've owned an Atari 800 for over a year now, and I keep waiting. When are we going to see some decent sports software for that system!? I've seen what this system can do and I can't believe that no company has had the brains to turn out some good sports simulations — *especially* games that can be played against another player or the computer.



STARBOWL FOOTBALL

Please reassure me — sports games *are* on the way, aren't they?

John Tree
Santa Monica, CA

Ed: John, do I have good news for you! The sports explosion is about to ignite on the Atari front. Gamestar is producing what looks to be a spectacular football simulation and will follow with an entire line of sports and sports-like games.

There's also an absolutely fantastic soccer simulation, 16K on cartridge now ready for the 400/800 from England's Thorn-EMI that plays either head-to-head or solitaire, and with the first few games, be prepared to have the British computer program drive you into the turf!

INTELLI-TALK

On "Better Control for Your Games", I agree that the control disc on the Intellivision is awful. Luckily, you mentioned the name of an inventor who came up with an adapter. Unluckily, you didn't tell us where he could be reached.

Your illustrators are very good — even excellent! One question: are the Gerbers on your staff any relation to Steve Gerber, creator of "Howard the Duck"?

Ronald J. Ponsart
Madison, OH

Ed: Unfortunately, the gentleman who invented the Injoy-A-Stick, a Mr. Lasky, seems to have disappeared. In any case, those Intellivisionaries desiring a joystick control for your system, C&T Creations (127 Weybosset St., Providence, RI 02903) has an item called the "Skil-Stik" that should end your problems. Additionally, Jenco Home Entertainment Center in Staten Island, N.Y. has a similarly excellent product. Scan the pages of **EG** *and you may even find more!*

However, the products reviewed in **EG** *are almost exclusively obtainable through retail outlets. Heck, we get letters asking for Atari's address so people can buy games from them! Manufacturers make the products, retailers sell them.*

A PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT

I think **Utopia** for the Intellivision by Mattel is the best cartridge made this year. The reason? *Utopia* isn't an ordinary space game or maze chase, but offers a highly original concept of running a country. It also gives gamers a chance to work together as well as compete against each other.

Ken Tanaka
Ridgewood, N.J.

Ed: Very perceptive, Ken. Often in the rush to produce arcade-style smashes, companies overlook the type of sophisticated simulations that can maintain popularity over much longer periods of time. Games such as Utopia highlight the strengths of the Intellivision. And since each system has things it does better than the competition, it makes sense for companies to design toward the hardware's strength.

UTOPIA

So keep on enjoying Utopia — but you'd better keep the populace happy!

COVERING THE ODYSSEY, TOO!

I am an Odyssey² videogame owner. In **EG**, about 80% of the coverage tells all about Atari and Intellivision. Odyssey's games are every bit as good as the others — how about a little more focus on Odyssey?

John McKay
Orange, CA

Continued on page 106

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Across a Continent with Joystick in Hand

By LES PAUL ROBLEY

Most first-time travelers to Europe are swamped by the incredible number of escorted tours offered by the local travel service of the cities they visit. If it's Paris, one usually pays a call to the old standbys — the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, the Champs Elysees. When in Rome, one does like the Romans, etc.

But as a specimen of that particular breed of human known as electronic gaming enthusiasts, I thought it would be fun to supplement the usual with the unusual and take a tour of Europe that nobody would dream of taking. Thus was born this excursion to the continent's video arcades, or to paraphrase several travel books that so eloquently put it: "Europe on Twenty Quarters a Day."

Bidding a bon voyage to the U.S., the first stop any respectable arcader will want to make is London, England — home of the original pinball arcade, Brighton Amusement Center, Jack the **Robotron**-Ripper, and VIC. London, one of the biggest nightlife centers in the world, is literally crawling with arcades. So much so, that they are even thinking of adding an "Arcades of Picadilly and Oxford Circus" to the list of famous London pub and ghost walks. If they do, they'll naturally have to include Soho as the number one arcade district.

Soho arcades must be seen if only because they represent a dying phenomenon. Soho, the place where one goes to find gambling, striptease, porn shops, and other forms of healthy eroticism, probably gets the award for having the seediest arcade in the world. It's called the "Las Vegas," and besides having a host of **Asteroids, SI, Zaxxon**, and **Pac-Man** machines clustered about the main lobby, it also houses slot machines, free fall, roulette tables, a striptease show, and triple-X movie booths. (Naturally, I had to force myself to enter, ever-obedient to the call of reportorial duty.)

It's a misunderstanding of the situation when some American parents believe arcades are havens for undesirables. Yet, that's what they are in Soho.

Moving South through the lovely countryside of Kent to Brighton, we reach another center for coin-ops, and this one's huge. Located right on the waterfront is the Brighton Amusement Park, scene of Mods and Rockers riots in the 1960's, and still a weekend retreat for today's punk rock crowd.

At one of the stops before Brighton, some punkers, complete with mohawks, spider tattoos, and multi-coloured hair entered my train compartment. I had been touring museums that morning and was feeling rather frazzled from nearly missing my train. One of them said, "What's the matter, love? You look like you've just been siphoned." From this bit of introduction, we then went on to discuss the nuclear arms race, and from there arrived at the subject of videogames. It seems this crew was headed for the very same park as myself. I asked about their favorite electronic games. The guy with the spider said, "Like, I like that '*#@*-ing' one with the disc."

"You mean Tron?" I suggested.

"No, disc!" he said, starting to get a little perturbed with me. "The '*@*-ing' one you hit at each other on the '*#@*-ing' table. I kill at that." I guess he meant air hockey, so I let it go at that.

Cited as having the largest arcade in the world, the Brighton Amusement Park has more pins than videos, plus

The pride of Piccadilly Circus — an arcade!

ARCA

lots of old-fashioned fairground games. The number of games I counted was 302, give or take a stray *Pac-Man.*

One of the attendants whose job is to troubleshoot the ailing coin-ops, told me off the cuff that small skirmishes break out in the arcade at least once a night. Bobbies are known to heavily patrol the area on weekends, waiting for that one big brawl that almost invariably seems to occur. Luckily, I was there on a Tuesday.

Arriving in the divine City of Light for the first time — Paris, France — you automatically expect to find some form of electronic amusement. And you won't be disappointed. Parisian arcades seem much more subdued in character than their coin-op cousins across the Channel. They're smaller and generally devoid of fancy-frills like blinking lights and brawling. But like the ones in Soho, they seem to congregate close to the red-light district, namely Pigalle (Does this tell you something about the European's concept of entertainment?) However, there are a few in the student Saint-Michel area, sporting names like "Las Vegas" (I wonder if it's part of the same chain) and "Parisian Amusement Center."

The video stores selling games and VCRs tend to locate among the richer, right-bank residents. "Lido Musique and Video" on the Champs Elysees, is I've heard, the most popular *and* inexpensive.

Taking the French Rail to Germany and the tiny villages that dot the Rhine River, like Braubach and Rudesheim, the concept of the arcade seemed lost to the inhabitants. And understandably so — why spend your time stuffing Deutschemarks into a machine when the beauty of the Rhineland lies all around?

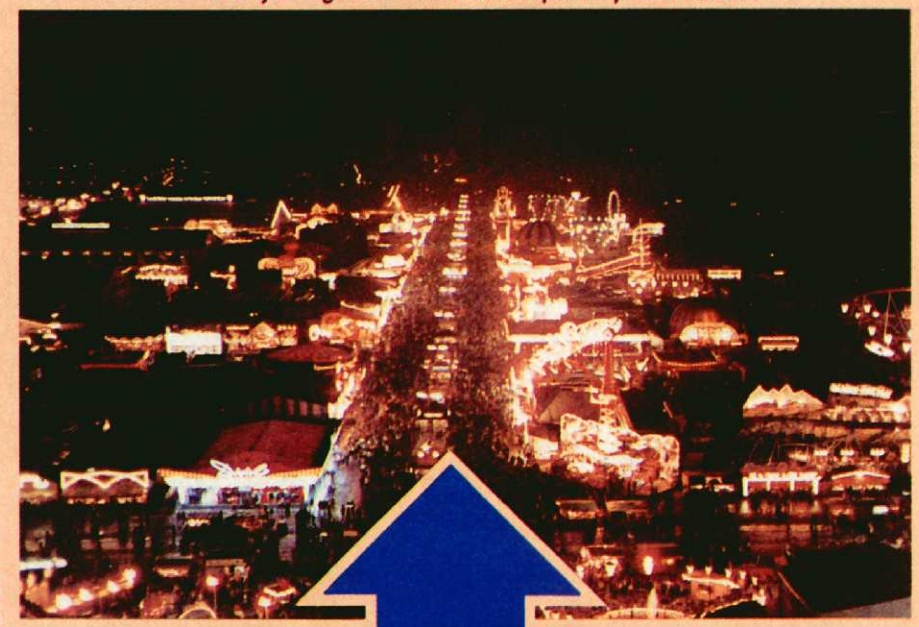
Next stop: Berlin and three-penny operas and, boy, does this city have arcading wall to wall. The West Berliners combine electronics with music in more ways than one. Not only does Germany sport some of the finest electronic music artists like Tangerine Dream, Eberhard Schoener, and Richard Wahnfried, but their discos combine music and dancing with all sorts of electronic wizardry, not to mention videogames. A club like the Cheetah, the largest disco in Germany, has no fewer than seven dance floors accommodating 2,000 youngsters. It creates a futuristic vision right out of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange.* Then there's the Big Eden Disco which is loaded with electronic gimmicks — the *Pac-Man* theme is often souped-up to boom over the loud speakers. The under-25 set line up in front of this club in droves.

Though I didn't get to see firsthand, it's doubtful whether arcading is popular in the joyless eastern sector of the city. Not many find "Potato Yields in Breklovik, Russia" an exciting concept for a game.

Back in the relative safety of West Germany, and moving down the Rhine to Frankfurt, we next find ourselves on the Romantische Strasse bound for Munich. . .and the Oktoberfest beer festival. This once-in-a-lifetime encounter is like a meeting of the United Nations gone awry. Never have you been so close to thousands of people you don't know, all having a grand time singing "Eins Zwei Sufa" while downing liters of the gold stuff.

At the Oktoberfest you'll no doubt find as many games and rides as there are beer halls and drunk foreigners. The interesting thing about the electronic ones is that practically all contain plain wooden cabinets with bootleg titles such as **Puck-Man, Hollywood,** and **Donkey King** emblazoned on their fronts. The games themselves played the same, though I freely admit I wasn't always in a position or state of

The City of Lights resembles a metropolitan pinball machine



DING THROUGH EUROPE

ARCADING THROUGH EUROPE

mind to accurately measure their speed or level of difficulty. In fact, I don't even remember where I was half the time. Prozst!

In Vienna, Austria, I thought it'd be interesting to see to what extent the videogame had caught on, since culturally, it is an extremely old city. Approaching the Prater (Vienna's famous amusement park that boasts the Riesenrad, the largest ferris wheel in the world), I saw men in bowlers and women wearing elegant gowns strolling beneath the towering circle of girders. It resembled a scene from King Vidor's silent classic "The Big Crowd". Really psyched-up at not knowing what to expect, I entered the fairgrounds, only to come to the sad realization that the group of people were merely extras for a film that the Austrian government was making.

As modern as the Prater is today, a visitor can still discover some quaint Viennese touches that have been added to the typical amusement park attractions. In addition to several hair-raising thrill rides that have yet to make it past the builder's code here in the States, the park has an original swing-the-mallet-and-ring-the-bell game and a try-your-luck at dunking-the-damsel. But the places with most of the patronage — yes, you guessed it — the arcades!

The Austrians have taken to the little yellow gobbler with the same gusto as we Americans have. The only difference is that those are schillings they're stuffing and not quarters. So far, there're four arcades, the largest again carrying that ubiquitous title: Las Vegas.

By contrast, arcading in Venice, Italy is virtually non-existent. I asked three different video store owners where I might find one, as I was going cold turkey and needed a fix. They just looked at me and pointed to their 300,000 lire Atari VCS units. Since that amounts to 273 American dollars, I figured I didn't need one that bad after all.

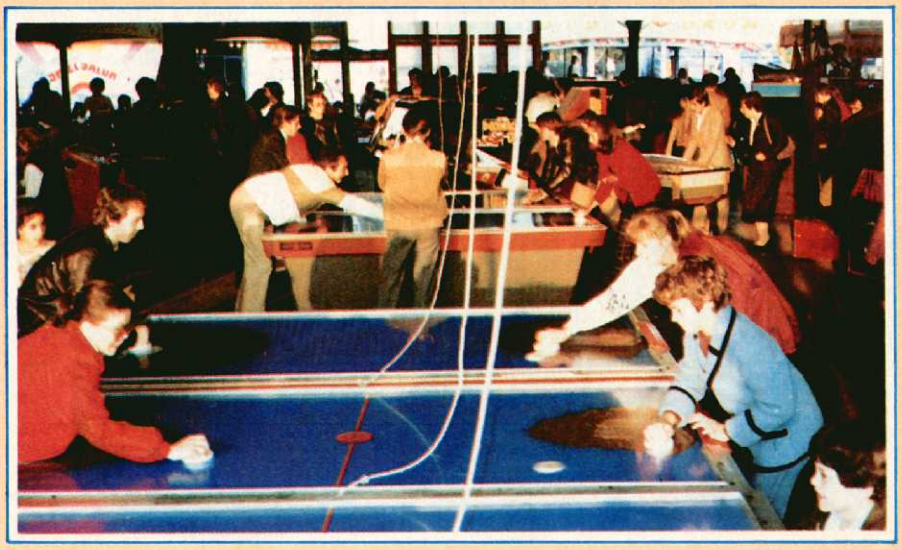
The ambiance runs from old world charm to space age flash

If the City of Canals hasn't discovered arcading yet, it *has* been fully explored in Florence and Rome. In the former city, it's surprising to find midget arcades amidst the beautiful Florentine architecture and celebrated works of Michelangelo, Da Vinci, Donatello, and Machiavelli. These miniature gaming centers usually occupy the anterooms of large hotels. A few have become the star attractions in clubs like the Space Electronic at 37 Via Palazuolo. A multi-media environmental dance hall designed by four heavily avant-garde architects, the Space Electronic is stocked with the latest electronic games—**Tron, Zaxxon, Frogger, Frenzy**—plus unusual odds and ends like an open parachute hanging over a stainless steel dance floor.

Roma, home of the Etruscan Wolf, Romulus, Remus, and Fellini, has its share of arcades. . .and misleading ones as well. Quite a few European buildings, particularly in Rome and Paris, display the word "Arcade" on their facade. These are generally a large group of stores housed within the same structure, not unlike our shopping malls. You go in asking for the nearest *Zaxxon*, and you might end up with a bottle of perfume.

Popular favorites in Rome are similar to our own, but lag by a few months. **Pac-Man, Centipede, Gorf** and **Ber-**

Many arcades offer non-electronic games, like Air Hockey



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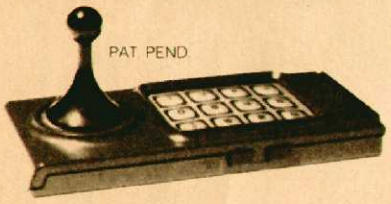

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zerk seem to hold the honors, with a knock-off of **Donkey Kong** called **King Kong** (not the Tigervision home version) following closely. It's quite funny to watch an Italian kid play *Berzerk* and hear: "Gallina! Pelea como robot!" or something to that effect.

At the bottom of Europe lies the final stop on the tour, Greece. Athens is a busy city, containing 30% of the total Grecian population. That's about 3.6 million persons. The significance of this is that what appears on the surface to be a city of antiquity is really a modern metropolis. Coin-ops occupy almost every bar and clip-joint at the Plaka, and are even present on boats to the Cyclades Islands. It is quite a cultural shock to watch a Greek folk dance at the Taverna Seven Brothers, complete with the high tinges of pandouras playing and plates being broken on the floor, and to hear our friend "wacka-wacking" in the background.

The isle of Mykonos has probably *the* tiniest videō arcade in the world with a grand total of four machines. Corfu on the Ionian side is not far behind with about six on the entire island. As yet, there are no coin-ops situated on the Acropolis around the Parthenon, but give 'em time. . .

Europe on 20 Quarters a Day

American arcaders may not know how good they really have it when it comes to electronic games. The European PAL television system may offer better quality with its increased number of scanlines, but when it comes to "the price of pleasure," we've got them beat. If you thought throwing quarters into hungry coin-ops was difficult, try letting go of two French francs (about 38 in American money), 400 lire in Italy (36¢), five schollings in Austria (32¢), 20 drachma in Greece (36¢), one guilder in Holland (40¢), or a whopping one Deutschemark in guess-where (44¢). Only in England were the rates quite agreeable — one 10 penny piece to play **Pac-Man** (about 17¢). As with the m.p.g. on foreign cars, your rates may vary.

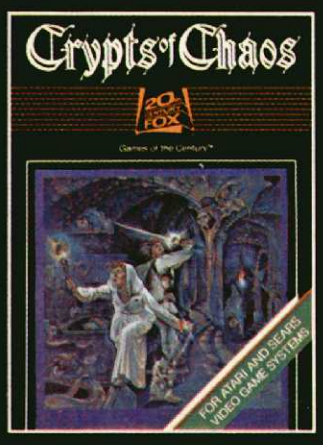
Taking a look at what's available on the home programmable scene, both Atari and Mattel were prominent in video stores. All the new cartridges that are available here have also made a splash overseas. The cartons were the same, in English, with probably (hopefully) an instruction booklet in the appropriate language. There were even Intellivision Voice Synthesis Modules on display at some stores (I wonder if they spoke in English).

On the computing end, the VIC Commodore holds the low-price line. The Atari 400 and 800 models were just on the verge of making their debut.

Pricing of the Atari and Mattel machines is, to say the least, interesting. In England, the Atari VCS sold for 94 pounds ($160.00) and the Intellivision MC for 153 pounds ($261.00). In Amsterdam, Atari was 399 guilders ($160.00) and Mattel 599 guilders ($240.00). In Venice, Atari was 300,000 lire ($273.00) and Mattel 349,000 lire ($317.00). In Rome, there was an interesting switch. The Atari was more expensive at 289,000 lire ($263.00), while the Intellivision was only 249,000 lire ($226.00). What clear-thinking Roman wouldn't choose the superior Mattel graphics over the Atari at that price?

Cartridges everywhere averaged about the same, from $35.00 to $50.00. So, you see, even though we don't have millennium-old buildings in the U.S., or organ grinders, horse-drawn carriages, gondolas, and tartufos, we still have it pretty nice when it comes to electronic games. Oh yes, for those enterprising lads who want to emulate the record collectors by buying American cartridges here and selling them for a profit overseas, don't waste your money. The PAL system won't accept our substandard TV transmissions.

IF STRATEGY ISN'T YOUR GAME, CRYPTS OF CHAOS WILL EAT YOU ALIVE.



It took the master at Fox video games to create Crypts of Chaos—the new strategy game that would challenge the mind of a sorcerer. It's a dark fantasy world of wondrous wizards and terrible trolls. There is treasure there. But to win it you will have to be very very clever. For it's guarded by dragons. And they have had their fill of witless players.

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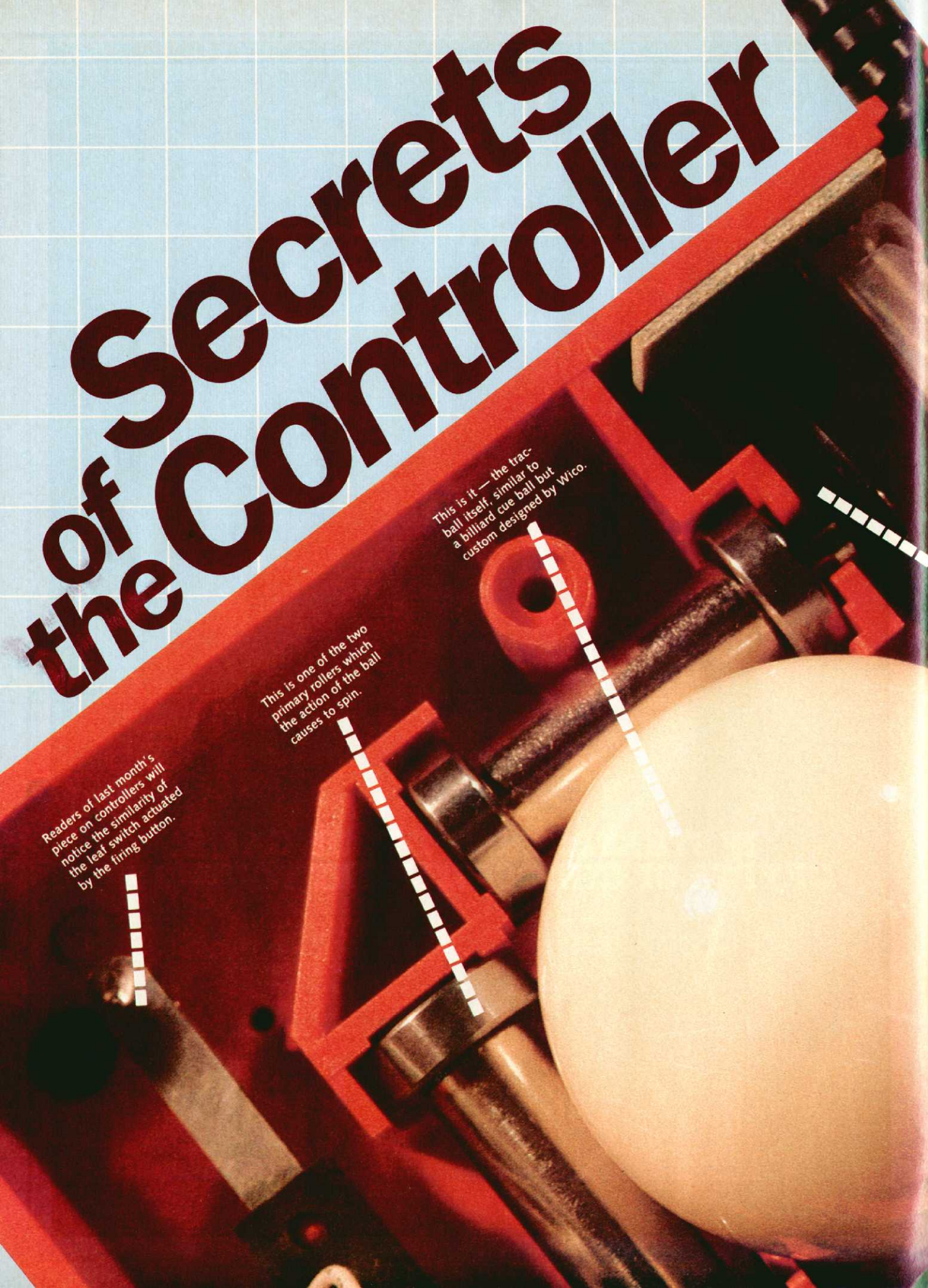

This is it — the trac-ball itself, similar to a billiard cue ball but custom designed by Wico.
This is one of the two primary rollers which the action of the ball causes to spin.
Readers of last month's piece on controllers will notice the similarity of the leaf switch actuated by the firing button.

Why Things Happen When you Push the Button

By HENRY B. COHEN

In the first installment of this series, we pried open a joystick to see what makes it work. This time, we're going to focus on some of the more exotic videogame and computer game controllers.

Button-Clusters

A button-cluster is a set of four on/off switches that functions exactly like a joystick. Just think of the cluster as being electronically identical to the switch section of a joystick —the part that you never actually see unless you disassemble the device.

To illustrate this point, a large handle could be glued to the top of a button cluster and the whole mess would function like a big, clunky joystick. The fifth button of a cluster will always be a firing button so that for all intents and purposes, these two forms of controllers are totally interchangeable.

Some button clusters, made for home use, also have an auto fire option built into them. This is a battery-powered electronic circuit that causes the firing circuit of the game computer to cycle on/off very rapidly. A similar device could be built into a joystick, a tracball or a paddle controller. The circuit could even be supplied as an outboard device to upgrade other controllers because it is simple and inexpensive to manufacture. The only problem with auto-firing is that it partially defeats the purpose of the game by lowering the skill that's required of the arcader.

In button-clusters, quality differences are determined by the beefiness and precision of the switches themselves and by their overall quality of construction. As many companies buy

A perforated wheel spun by the tracball's rotation, determining control signal translation.
It's not much to look at, but this is the ROM module that translates the control instructions.
The ball is supported by three rollers — this is the primary, stabilizing roller.

Secrets of the Controller

these switches from the same manufacturer, aesthetics and price are usually the only significant differences among such units.

Paddles

Paddle controllers work in the same way as potentiometer joysticks. That is, they vary resistance in a circuit and thus provide the game computer with an absolute value — not an *on* or *off* condition. The exception to the rule is that at either of the extreme positions they are, in effect, read by the computer as either "n" (no resistance) or "off" (X-resistance).

The precision of the paddle derives from its construction and the game program itself. A computer grade potentiometer (remember a potentiometer is a variable resistor) will virtually always provide the same reading to the computer whenever it is set in the same position. What we are talking about is a highly precise volume control that always sets the same level when it is reset to the same position. The game program is asking the control for a numerical set of values (resistance) and expects to get the right answer. Any slop in the system coming from either the hardware (paddles) or the software (the game itself) results in unsure play action.

For the ultimately precise game controller, we defer to the tracball.

Tracballs

From an engineering standpoint, tracballs are elegant devices capable of instantaneous and totally precise inputs to the game computer.

For home use — and this will surprise most of you — they actually contain a degree of ROM (Read Only Memory) and thus are almost baby computers in and of themselves. In arcade usage, this memory is contained in the console rather than in the tracball assembly.

The ball itself is a billiard ball. It rests in an assembly that contains two working steel rotors and a stabilizer. The rotors terminate in disks perforated uniformly at their outer circumference. Through these holes, a light beam's shown which is read by a sensor and interpreted by the ROM contained within the tracball housing. One disk is used for horizontal movement, the other for vertical. The light beam passing through the twin disks is read for position and speed. Is it going from left to right or right to left, and how quickly? The ROM determines direction and speed, can tell which or if both of the disks (horizontal or vertical) is spinning, and produces a control signal from this information.

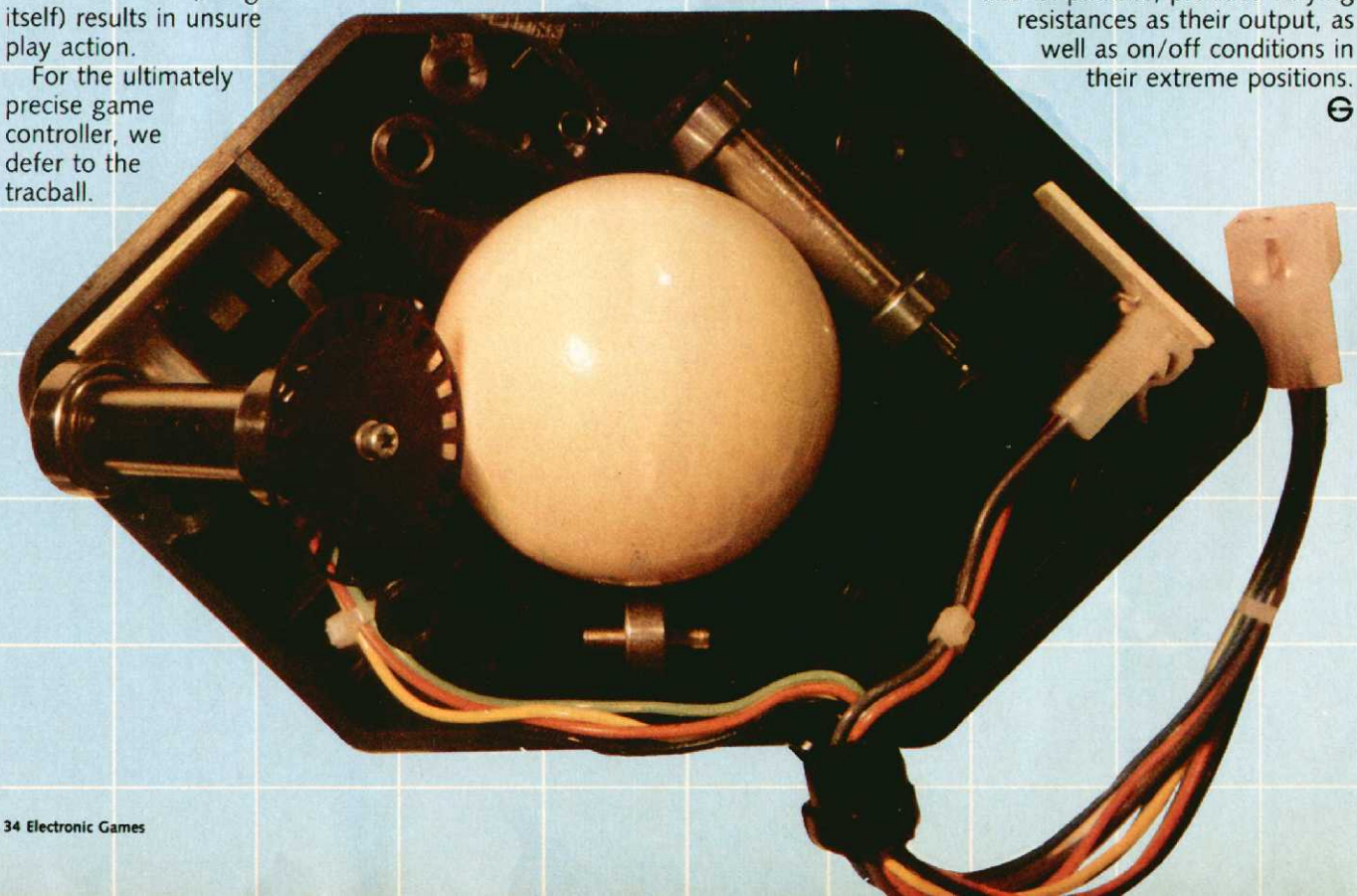
But the built-in ROM and lights need power to operate. If the host computer (videogame system you're playing) can supply it, great, if not you've got to plug the tracball in. That's why for Atari units, which supply very low voltages to their controllers, no external power supply is needed, but for most other systems, a separate power supply is used.

Quality difference among tracballs is again a function of precise fit and finish, as they are after all. . .machines.

In addition, the durability of the ball itself is critical since it is constantly in contact with the steel rollers of the mechanism. The rollers should be sealed with ball-bearings, as they spin at high speed whenever the controller is used. If ever there was a controller that *had* to be durable, it is the tracball.

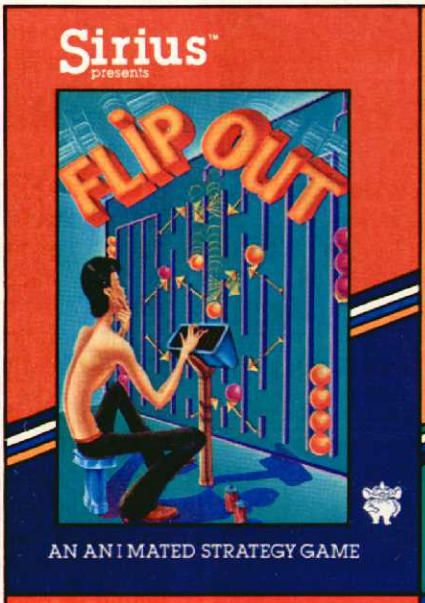
To summarize the entire spectrum of controllers in a few words, there are really two types. Joysticks, button-clusters and tracballs provide, primarily, an on/off condition for the game computer to read. Potentiometer controllers, which include some joysticks and all paddles, produce varying resistances as their output, as well as on/off conditions in their extreme positions.

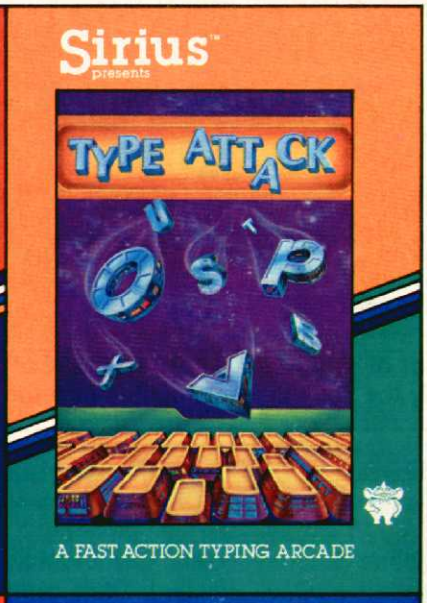
Compare this industrial Wico tracball found in most coin-op machines to the home version — except for the case and resident ROM, they're twins!



Have A Great Playday!

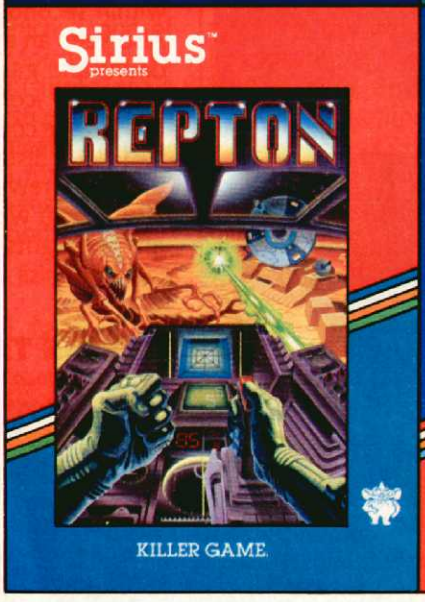
Take your marble to the top. Pick your spot and let it drop. Hope for a flip instead of a flop. Once you get it, the fun never stops! It's FLIP OUT — a crazy new strategy game for one or two players. Each marble you drop causes a chain reaction, so take your time and plan carefully. Plan right and you'll flip, if you didn't you Flip Out!

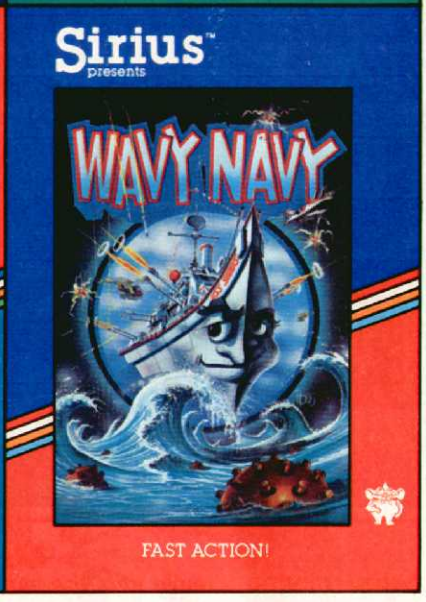




Turn your keyboard into a typing arcade! You can blast attacking letters and words right out of the sky. Type Attack was designed by a professional educator and the fast action game experts at Sirius. It features 39 preprogrammed lessons and 60 user defined lessons. Great sound, graphics and a real-time words per minute bar make improving your typing skills fun!

It is up to you to stop the invasion of the evil Quarriors and save Repton. You are armed with devastating Nuke Bombs, a Radar Screen, a Laser Gun and an Energy Shield. You'll need them all! You'll be attacked by Nova Cruisers and Single Saucers. You must avoid Spye Satellites and deadly Dyne-Beam Shooters and you must stop the Draynes from depleting the Reptonian power supply. Repton is a battle so thrilling you'll be relieved to find out you're still on earth when it's over!





Talk about adventure on the high seas! You're blasting away at a squadron of enemy bombers and Kamikaze fighters from the deck of your P.T. boat. Suddenly you notice the sea is loaded with mines and an Exocet missile is screaming toward you on the horizon. Instinctively you jerk the joystick to the starboard, keeping your thumb on the fire button. Phew! That was close! Sometimes it's hard to believe Wavy Navy's just a video game.

New Games For Your Apple II From Sirius™

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PROGRAMMABLE PARADE

Drive Forever on One Tank of Gas with Turbo

TURBO

Coleco/ColecoVision

Nobody can ever accuse Coleco of not using its expansion interface. First there was the news of an upcoming skiing game in which the players will actually stand on a pair of simulated, wired-in skis (with only the tips visible on-screen) and direct their motion down the wild white slopes. Now we have a driving game complete with steering wheel, accelerator and stick-shift — and the most peeper-popping graphics ever seen on a home videogame!

TURBO

Turbo, of course, is an adaptation of the Sega classic that proved a driving videogame actually *could* succeed in arcades. The arcader's vehicle is the car in the immediate foreground as a group of clearing lights trip in sequence to start the race.

The longer the player keeps his car on the road, the greater the possible speed. A crash stops everything dead, and acceleration must begin anew. The wheel action is pretty good, the accelerator excellent, and the shift — actually a ColecoVision joytick mounted into the steering console — really gets the car in gear *quickly*.

The real kick here, of course, is the graphic wonderland through which the arcader travels. Cities, mountain highways, darkened tunnels with their tube-like illumination, forests, lakes, cityscapes, ice-roads and a mix-and-match collection of topography make for some luxury class videogame entertainment.

As with all ColecoVision games, there are four skill levels for either dual play or solitaire action. At level one, it's possible to keep the hammer down and just stay alive. At the more difficult levels, the resemblance to real driving becomes more obvious, and lead-foot racers will end up mangled among cars, trees and tunnels.

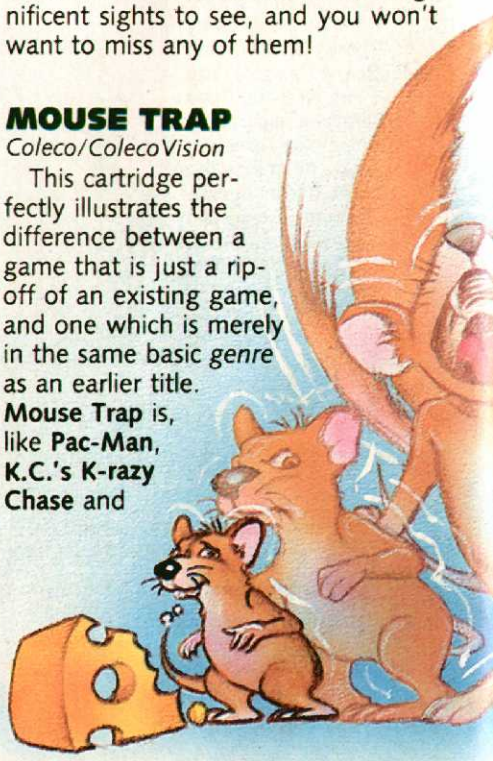
The graphics are not quite as rounded and realistic as Sega's, but the home version lacks the "ripple" effect that was pronounced in the arcade version. This one looks good, sounds good and plays good. Just watch out for the flag; that means there's an accident up ahead. An ambulance will come barreling down the center of the road within seconds, so get out of its way! Also keep an eye out for the inevitable debris and gas slicks — and once you get to the ice. . .!

As in the coin-op, players reaching a sufficient distance within an allotted time are rewarded with extra drive time. Use it well, there are some magnificent sights to see, and you won't want to miss any of them!

MOUSE TRAP

Coleco/ColecoVision

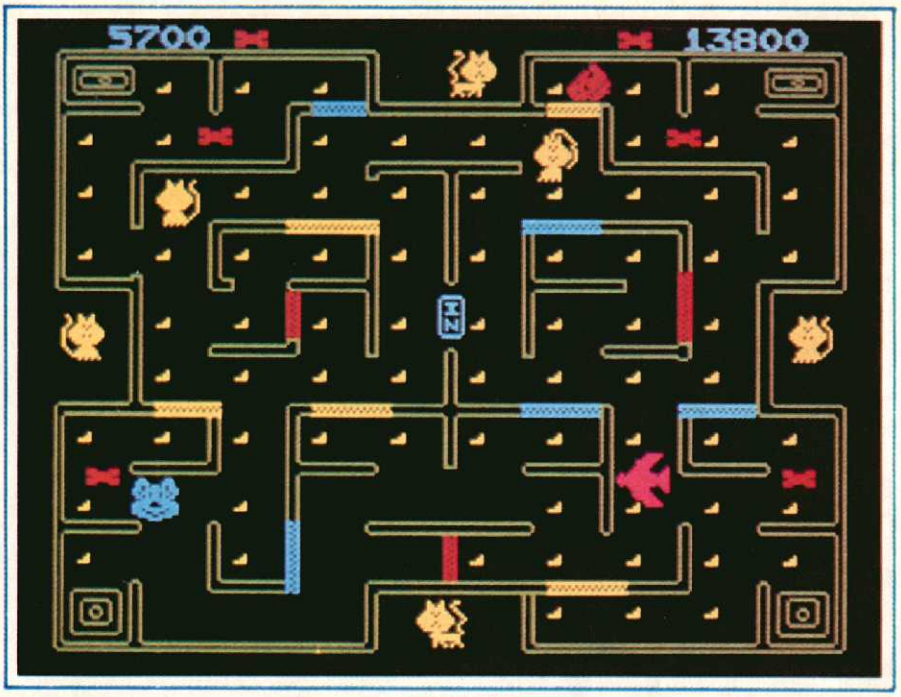
This cartridge perfectly illustrates the difference between a game that is just a rip-off of an existing game, and one which is merely in the same basic *genre* as an earlier title. **Mouse Trap** is, like **Pac-Man**, **K.C.'s K-razy Chase** and



Coleco's own **Ladybug**, a maze-chase. Yet the play mechanic of this new program for the ColecoVision is so different from other gobble games that *Mouse Trap* offers home arcaders a fresh challenge, requiring strategies which are more uniquely daring than those which one would use in those other maze-chase carts.

Mouse Trap is the first ColecoVision release to utilize an overlay (included with the cartridge, naturally). When slipped into the slot of one of the hand controllers, the overlay fits snugly over the keypad buttons to provide the player with the chance to exercise several options during the course of play. Buttons #1 (red), #2 (blue) and #3 (yellow) will each open and close the doors on the playfield which correspond to their color. Careful manipulation of these three controls allows the player directing the on-screen mouse to alter the maze in such a way as to frustrate the pursuing cats.

Another (literal) bone in the throat of those ferocious felines is that eating one of the four bones gives the mouse the power to temporarily change into a dog,and gives the cats a feel of what it's like to be among the hunted. This metamorphosis need not occur immediately, however, which is one of the touches that gives *Mouse Trap* its special spice. The rodent turns into a dog when the player pushes the green (center) button, which means that you can save up this little surprise for the mousers — for the moment — when it will do you the most good.



MOUSE TRAP

The deadly hawk, absent at the lowest of the four difficulty settings, makes regular appearances at the more rarified skill levels. Since it can swoop over the walls of the maze in its hunt for mousie, extraordinary measures must be taken to avoid its fatal touch. If the mouse enters the "In" box located at the center of the playfield, it pops up in one of the four corners. Sometimes, this is the only way to outfox the hawk, though a switch to the *wrong* one will, of course, put your rodent at the mercy of the beak and talons.

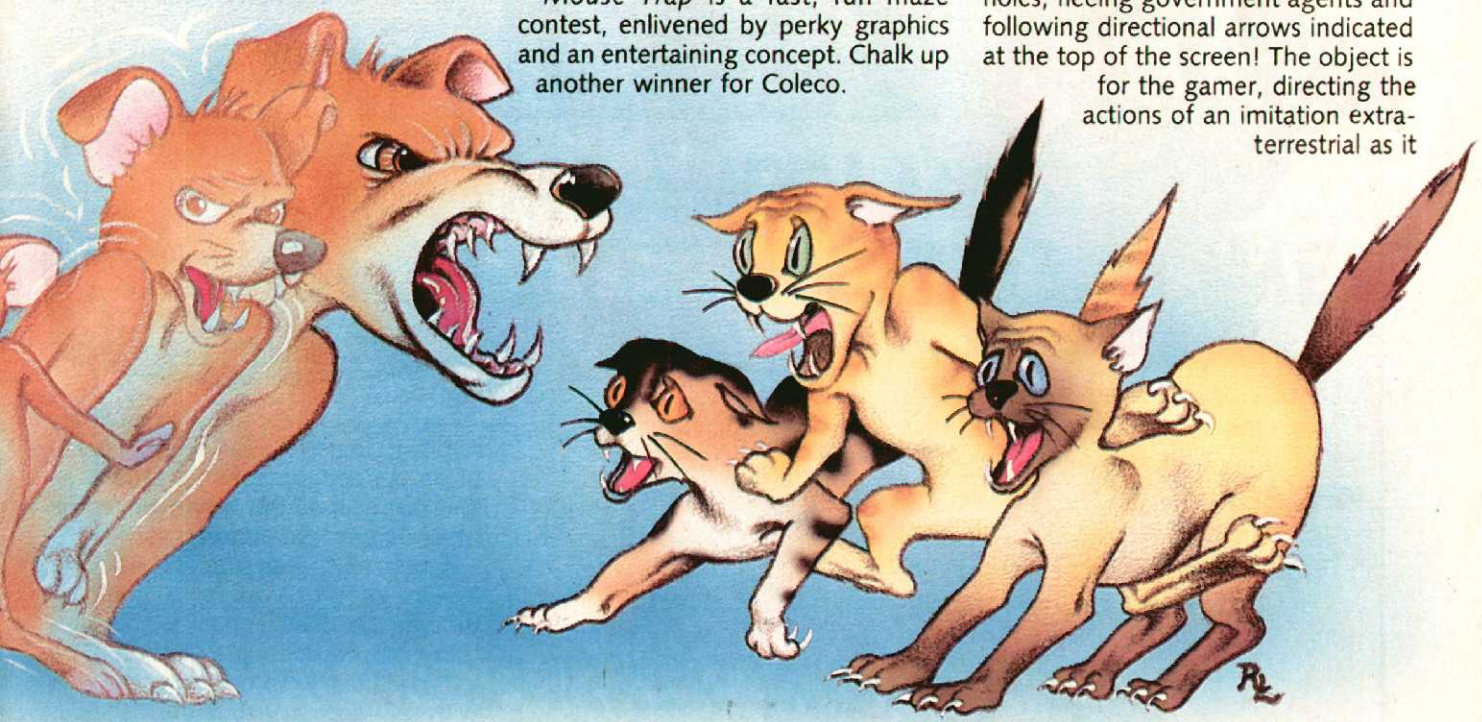
Mouse Trap is a fast, fun maze contest, enlivened by perky graphics and an entertaining concept. Chalk up another winner for Coleco.

E.T.

Atari/VCS

It's truly difficult to understand a games such as **E.T.**. After splurging a reported 10 million dollars to get the property and Steven Spielberg's cooperation, this game looks like it was turned out in about five weeks. The graphics are crude, the play mechanics are unlikely to captivate any but the youngest arcaders, and the entire project seems ill-conceived.

E.T. follows the surprisingly good **Raiders of the Lost Ark**, with a game that consists entirely of falling into holes, fleeing government agents and following directional arrows indicated at the top of the screen! The object is for the gamer, directing the actions of an imitation extraterrestrial as it



attempts to reconstruct its spaceship from the parts scattered around the playfield.

The big question is: Why? Why spend all that money on rights and commercial hype only to end up with a so-so cartridge?

There is virtually nothing to recommend about this game to adults, though it may work well as a kideogame. Regardless, "E.T." (the movie, that is) entranced an entire nation, young *and* old. Atari's attempt to capitalize on its name value is an insult to arcaders.

Save your time and money. And if E.T. does call home, please don't tell him about this.

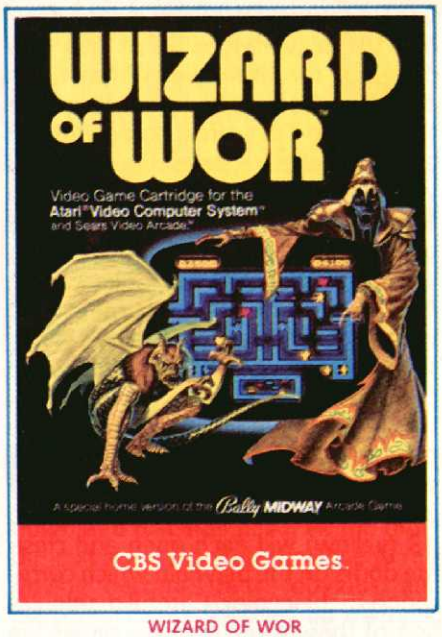
WIZARD OF WOR

CBS Videogames/Atari VCS

Because of the intricacies of product licensing, the gaming public seldom has the opportunity to see how two different companies would handle the translation of a coin-op design to the home screen. This one- or two-player maze shoot-out is the lone exception at the present time. Already the inspiration of the 1983 Arcade Award winner for *the* Best Multi-player Videogame, **The Incredible Wizard**, Midway's coin-op machine has now sparked a VCS-compatible cartridge from CBS Videogames.

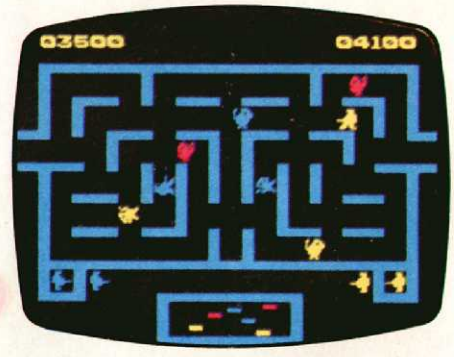
There's no question about it, the folks at CBS — a newcomer to the videogame cartridge field — have done themselves proud. In light of the limitations of the VCS hardware, as compared to the Astrocade senior programmable system, it would be foolish to expect **Wizard of Wor** to equal the quality of that Astrocade effort. That it comes so close to the mark is high praise, indeed.

All the elements of the coin-op have survived intact. One or two warriors are moved about the corridors of the maze with the joystick. Various creatures zip along those same corridors and, if they should touch one of the digital heroes, destroys them instantly.


WIZARD OF WOR
Video Game Cartridge for the
Atari Video Computer System
and Sears Video Arcade
A special home version of the Bally MIDWAY Arcade Game
CBS Video Games

WIZARD OF WOR

When the maze is clear of antagonists, there may — or may not — be some special encounters. The most taxing of these involves the appearance of the Wizard, a hip-shooting berserker who can wipe out a pair of warriors in a nanosecond. Once the round is completed, the player (or team, if it is a two-player event) goes on to a new, less convoluted labyrinth. Some of the monsters are invisible to the players unless the on-screen warriors would have a line-of-sight view of the beast. There's a second display, a radarscope, which helps the participants track these elusive foes. And when a beast bears down on your warrior unexpectedly, there's always the possibility that you can quickly duck into the



WIZARD OF WOR

scrolling tunnel — assuming it's in one of its periodic operational phases — and reappear all the way over on the other edge of the maze.

Much of the charm of Midway's *Wizard of Wor* was in its graphics, though the main appeal is the anything-can-happen play-action. The VCS can't really reproduce such visuals with any accuracy, but the CBS car-

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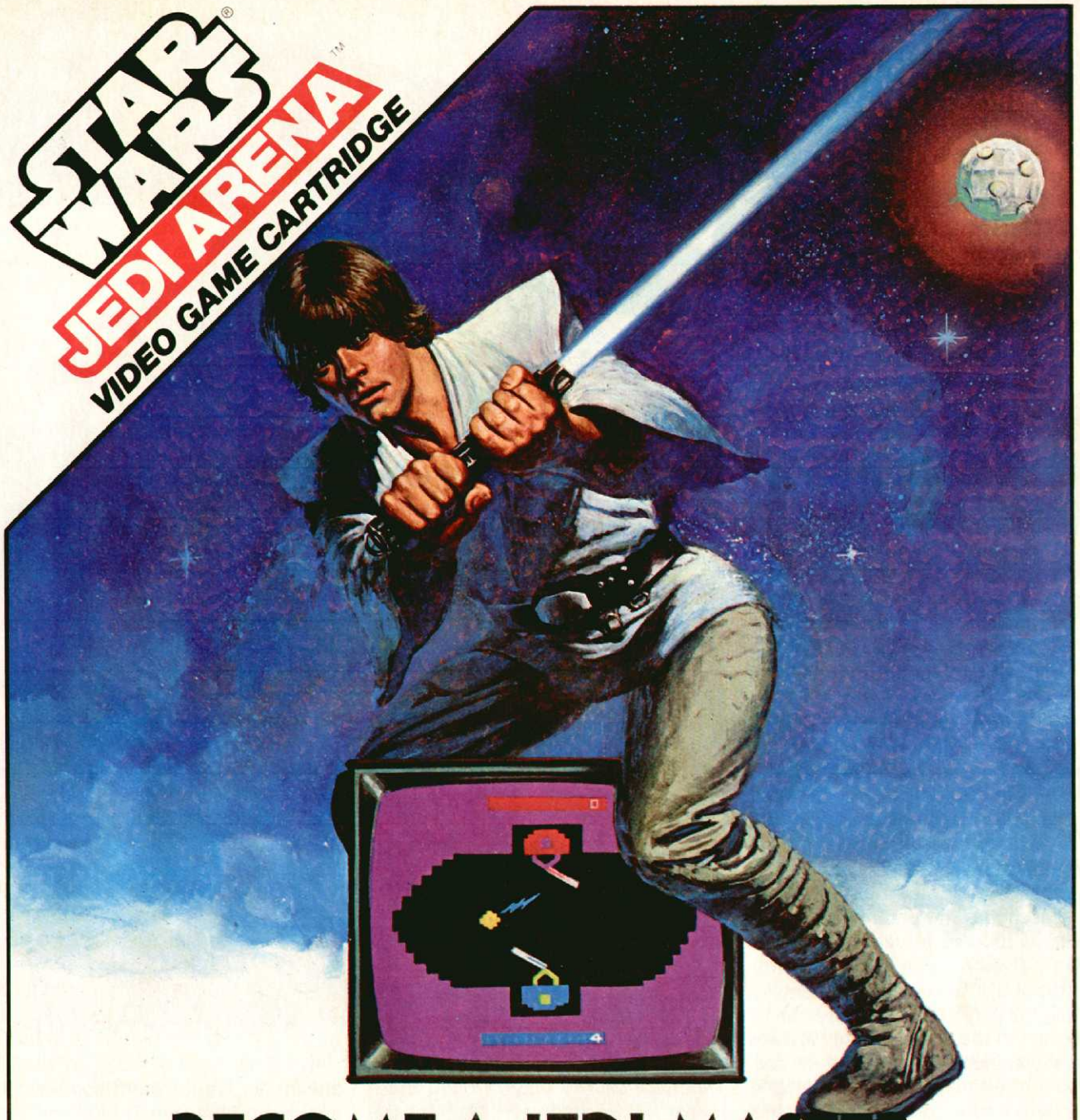

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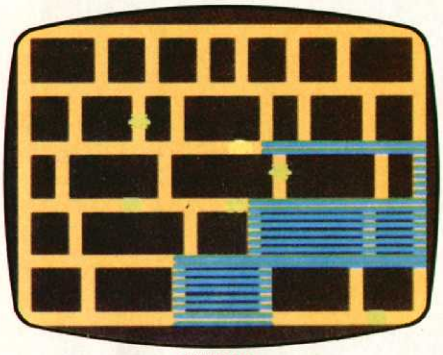
tridge is really quite attractive. It's not quite in the class of **Pitfall**, but *Wizard of Wor* looks better than most other carts produced for this system.

Wizard of Wor is a highly satisfying contest, all the more precious because so few other games allow two arcaders to participate at the same time.

AMIDAR

Parker Bros./for the Atari VCS

Second in the series of coin-op translations by Parker, **Amidar** is no **Frogger**, but it is, nonetheless, a solid VCS videogame with quite a bit going

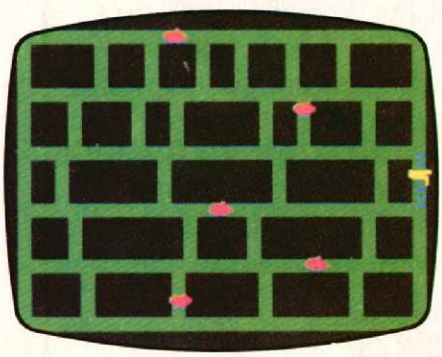


AMIDAR

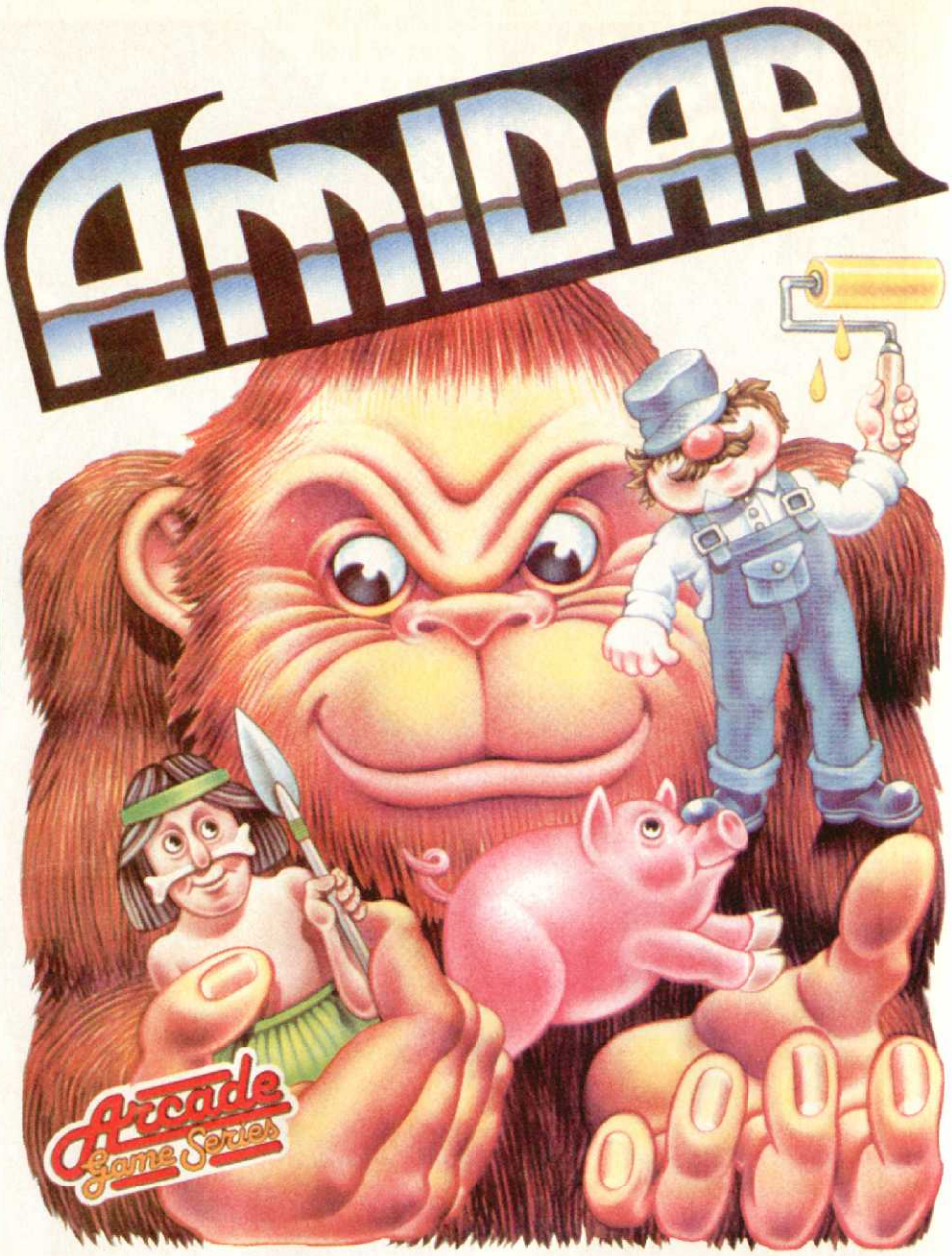
for it. Let's face it, the Ed English *Frogger* translation was one of the finest software achievements for this system. The Konami-created *Amidar*, on the other hand, while lacking the two-part harmonics and graphic splendor of its predecessor, is good videogaming with a ground-breaking play mechanic and enough whimsical elements to keep players satisfied.

Amidar, along with **Qix**, is the progenitor of the "box-building" contest. In *Qix*, the playfield's an empty canvas upon which the gamer creates squares and rectangles of any shape or size. *Amidar* offers players a pre-drawn grid over which the surrogate characters must travel, turning the yellow lines blue and watching the enclosed boxes fill in with color.

In the initial scenario, the gamer is an ape, chased by African warriors who can run faster than the simian.



AMIDAR



There are several ways around these jungle hunters, however. Each of the three available apes can turn into a phantom up to four times by hitting the action button, allowing the gorilla to pass harmlessly through his pursuers. Also keep in mind that the warriors — with the exception of the "tracer" who roves the perimeter of the playfield exclusively — will invariably turn any corner they encounter. Keep a corner, therefore, between yourself and your pursuer and all is well.

The ultimate revenge, however, is obtained by filling in the boxes in the four corners of the screen. This turns those brave warriors into "chickens" and allows the gorilla to engulf them for points. Even in their cowardly condition, they maintain their speed advantage, so let them come to the ape.

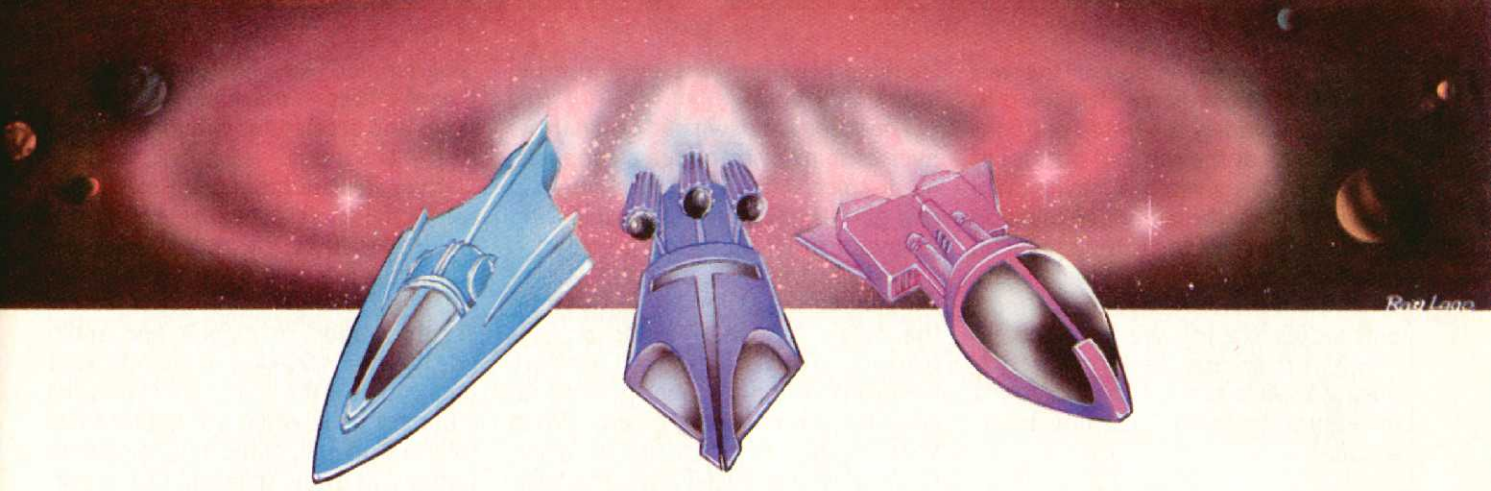
The second scenario plays faster, but is similar to the first. Here, the player ineffably becomes a paint roller while the pursuers metamorphosize into pigs! This is a weirdo quirk from the original, however, and the graphic switch is a nice change for the eyes.

The play is a trifle slow, the graphics aren't quite as definitive as they should be, but the bottom line is this: *Amidar* is a fine game, rendered faithfully and differently enough to make for a truly enjoyable change of pace.

ATTACK OF THE TIMELORDS

NAP/Odyssey² with voice enhancement

The latest science-fiction classic



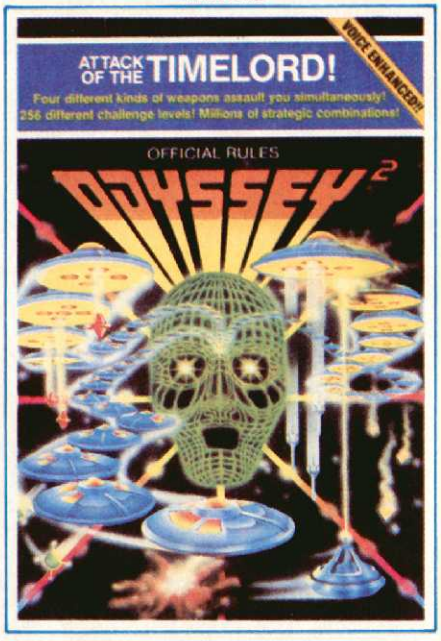
from the husband-wife videogame-design team of Ed and Linda Averette, **Attack of the Timelords**, is an absolute mind-bender, from the instant play begins to the final mocking epitaph delivered (for players with the voice module) by the Timelord him (it?) — self.

Originally developed under the working title, "Snake Ships from Sirius" (a much more apt and exciting moniker to be sure), *Timelords* is a programming achievement of the highest order. A series of intergalactic warships descend downscreen in serpentine fashion, and must be obliterated by the horizontally-scrolling laser cannon at the base of the playfield. The logarithm involved in creating this snake-like, vertical sidewinder took several months alone, but the resulting visual effect is a *melange'* of coin-op quality play-action and graphic excitement that surpasses even **UFO**, previously the top dog among the Odyssey² SF series.

Between rounds — or after being soundly whipped by the elusive, swirling snake-ships — the face of the Timelord zooms into *extreme* close-up. The voice module is used sparingly in this contest as the action and existing programmed audio are more than sufficient to carry the day. Players lucky enough to have the chatty peripheral, however, will be treated to the aforementioned tongue-lashing on each of the Timelord's round-concluding cameo appearances. The messages are cheery and bright, along the lines of "Prepare to be atomized, human sub-scum". Survive a round, and the sore loser invariably attributes his setback to bad luck, and overall offers all the charisma of Mr. T as "Clubber Lang" in "Rocky III" promising the Italian Stallion, "I gotta whole lotta' more. . .I gotta' whole lotta more!"

Play is challenging but compulsive because of the unusual nature and pulse-pounding excitement; audio-even *sans* Voice Module — and graphics. It's a tremendous technological achievement and one of the best new programmable videogames on the store shelves today. Other than that, it's got nothing going for it — except for some beautiful package art.

TIMELORD


VOICE ENHANCED!!!
ATTACK OF THE TIMELORD!
Four different kinds of weapons assault you simultaneously!
256 different challenge levels! Millions of strategic combinations!
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ODYSSEY²

CROSS FORCE

Spectravision/Atari VCS

Strike a blow for the freedom of the beleaguered planet Spectra by destroying the Morpul invaders from the planet Tzoris in this ingenious space combat game. Spectravision, which published the unusual perimeter shooting contest **Nexar** recently, shows once more that arcade game possibilities are still far from exhausted.

The special gimmick this time is that the player controls a pair of ships, one located at the top of the playfield, the other at the bottom. Moving the lower ship in one direction will, in variation #1, move the other ship an equal distance in the opposite direction. (Variation #2 provides parallel movement of the two ships.) Pushing the action button causes a special device called the "spectron" to create a deadly laser beam between the two ships. Any invader caught in this fashion instantly disintegrates.

The gamer has four spectrons at the beginning of the game, but these are used up when one of the attackers successfully bombs a ship, or the player fails to take advantage of the periodic appearance of fuel packets to keep up the energy level as indicated by the yellow bar in the lower right-hand corner of the screen. Potentially even more crucial is the temperature gauge, the blue bar directly beneath the yellow one. The weapon heats up rapidly if it is fired too often and cools down any time the spectron isn't firing. If the temperature climbs too high, melt-down will cost you one of your spectrons.

Four types of creatures attack the player in waves. First into the fray are the comparatively feeble Gupoids. Following them come the Flashers, Parasoids, and finally, the Nastroids. The last-named represent elite troops, and their assault is correspondingly more fierce.

One graphic quirk is the presence of a mothership which flies across the screen horizontally throughout the course of the game. It serves no active function in the game, so perhaps it is intended to be nothing more than a decoration and occasional distraction from the business at hand — blasting Morpuls. Apart from the mothership, the visuals are good but not great. The look is clean simplicity, generally the best course for a designer to take when putting together a cartridge for the VCS.

Of course, play-action is the real strength of **Cross Force**. The need to defend two widely separated positions — the ships at the top and bottom of the screen — gives it a flavor quite unlike that of the standard invasion game. Players will focus too tightly on their bottom ship and will usually lose a spectron in short order when the morpuls reduce the top ship to atoms.

Hats off to Spectravision for producing a space game with a refreshing difference from the ordinary blast-athon.

RIVER RAID

Activision/for the Atari VCS

The first home videogame credited to a woman, Activision's **River Raid** by Carol Shaw, is not exactly tea and crumpets. Carol, a member of ACTV's new East Coast design group, has turned out one of the best blood and thunder blast-'em-ups ever inserted into a VCS slot.

The scene is a dawn raid on a narrow river bristling with bridges, choppers, multi-colored bridges (that blow up *real* good!), jet fighters, gunships and a slew of other nasty technology.

You are the pilot of a B-1 stratowing assault jet skimming almost atop the river's surface, avoiding or, it is hoped, obliterating all enemy weapons and fuel depots without crashing or running dry on gas. When the fuel gauge begins to dip, however, simply pass over fuel dumps instead of blasting them. A tinkling sound indicates that you've captured the jet-juice.

The river's anything but static, also. Gunships constantly cruise back and forth across the narrow inlets, and they're tough to avoid.

The player's ship, fortunately, is programmed like a finely tuned piano. It banks, fires — machine-gun style — slows and accelerates with basic hand-to-joystick input.

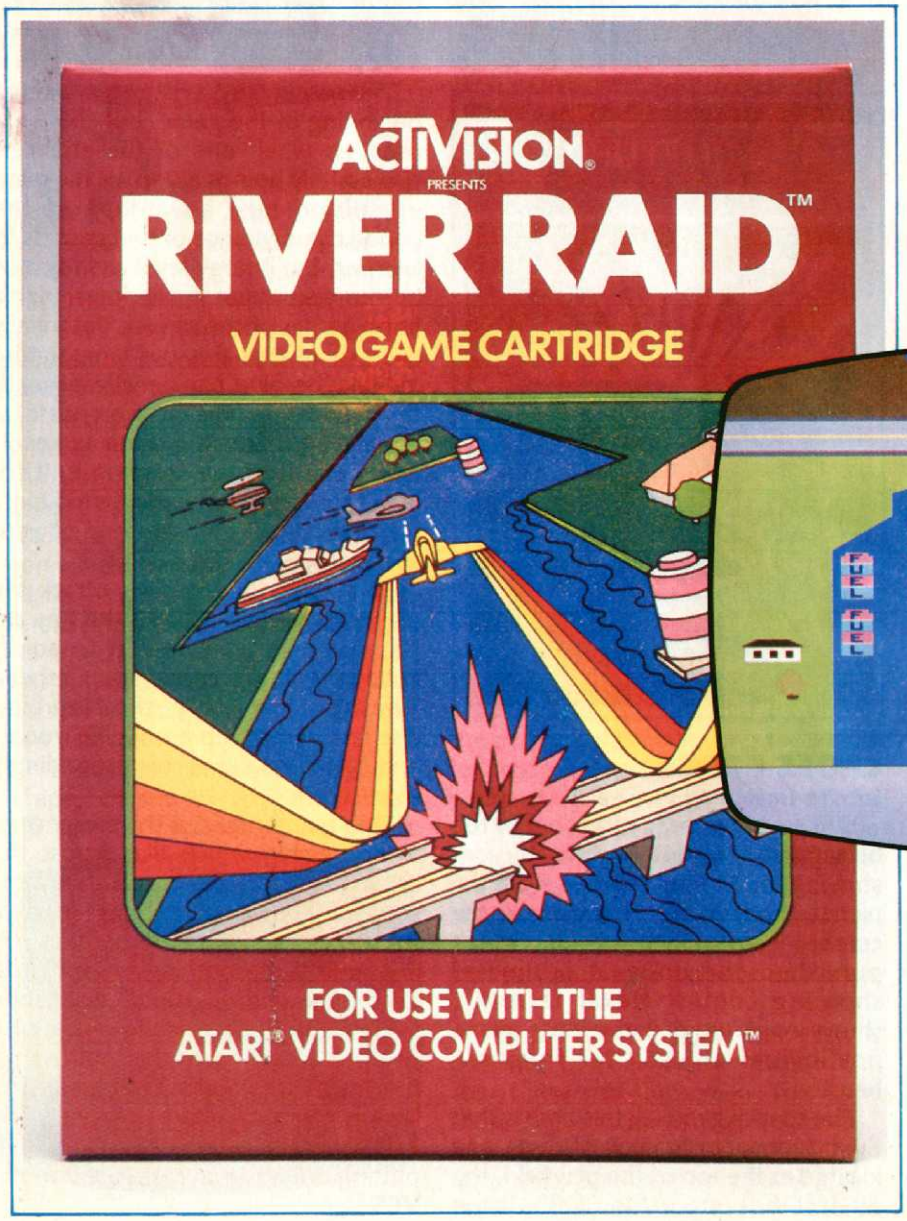
River Rescue more than makes up for Activision's previous entry, the weak **Sky Jinks**, by doing what the company has always done best — create original game concepts featuring the utmost in graphic and audio fidelity. And speaking of sounds, wait until you hear the klaxon that wails like a hungry baby when the gamer's B-1 runs low on fuel, or the exploding river bridges as they splinter into a collection of colored rubble.

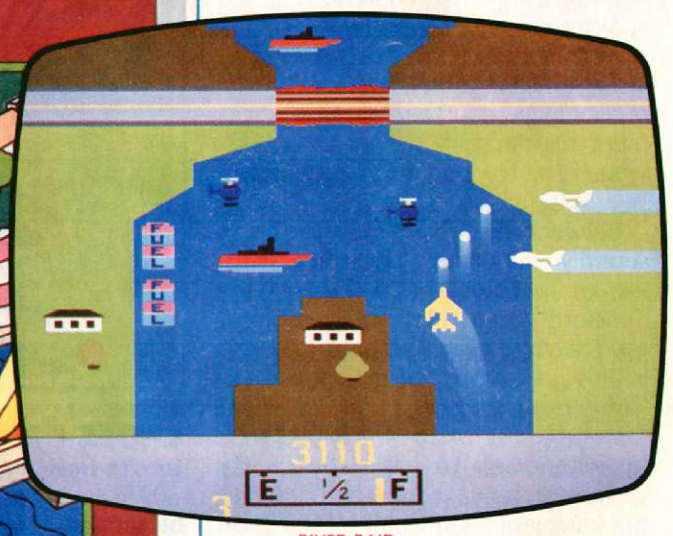
A great action game that stands up next to anything in Activision's library, *River Raid* is a certified rave. So punch up those engines, load up the artillery (get a good start, guys, we use plenty), fuel up, and let's go hunting!

In terms of internal logic and game play, however, there is something of a flaw in the conceptualization.

River Raid is obviously intended to include some of the elements found in games such as **Super Cobra.** As an example, if the player's ship makes any contact with the river bank, it explodes. Now, since the ship is flying low, this may not seem so logically jarring, but remember that the craft must stay suspended *above* the level of the waterway. It is therefore illogical to assume that flying over land should cause immediate destruction, any more than flying over water would.

The disappointing factor here primarily concerns the fact that so much of the playfield is taken up by ground space. Placing some weaponry there just might have helped.





RIVER RAID

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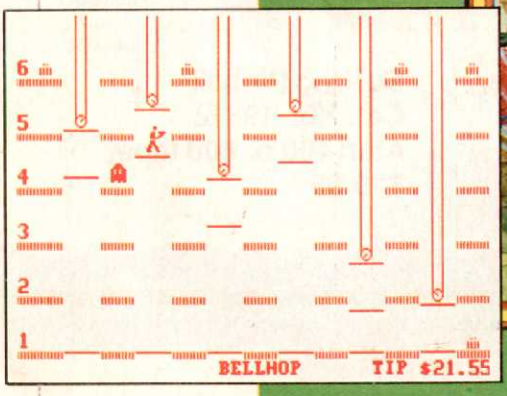

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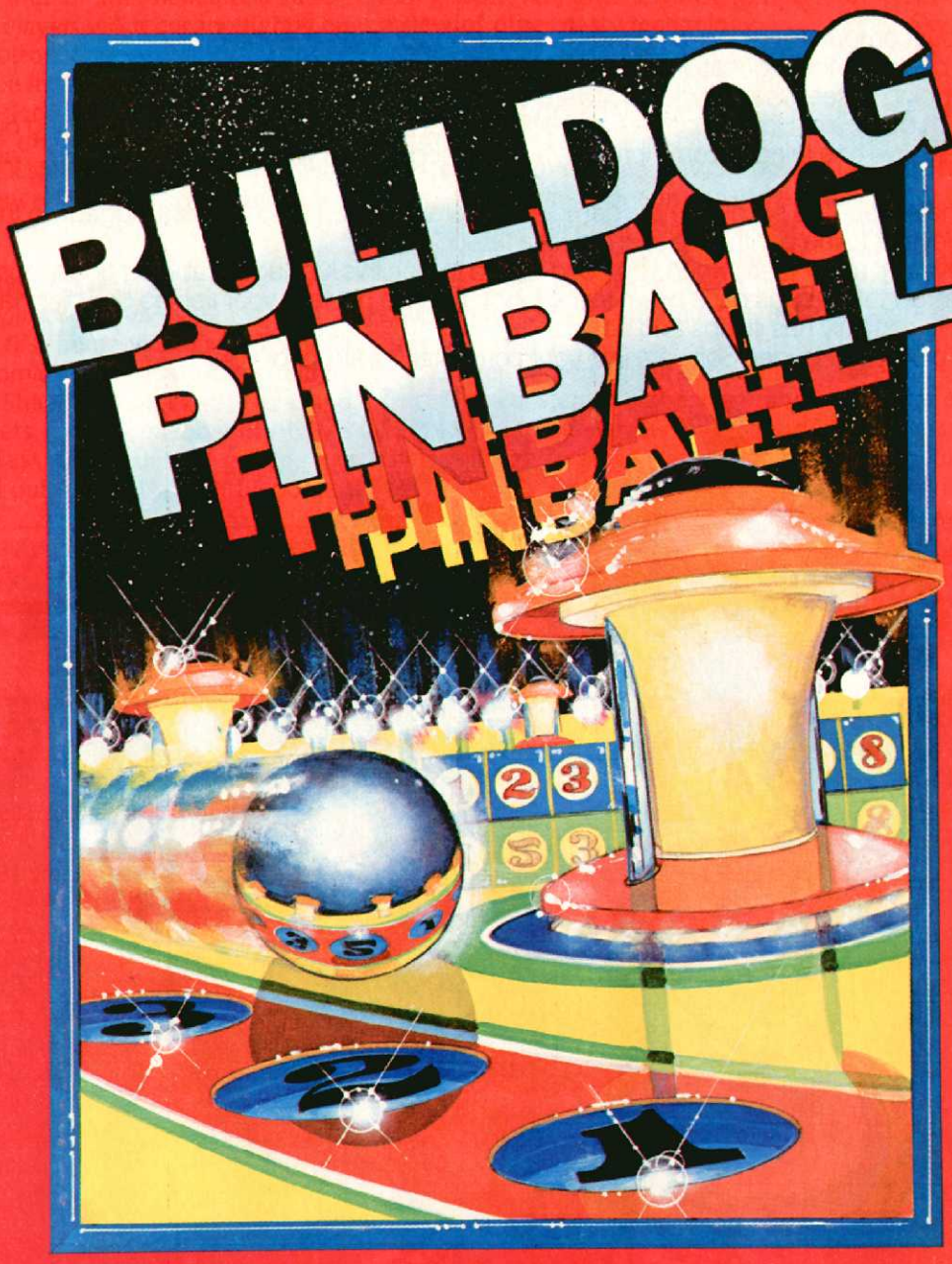

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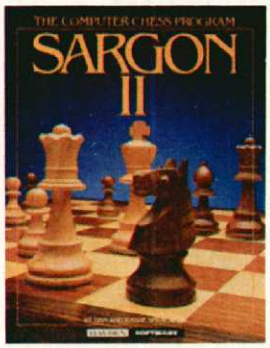

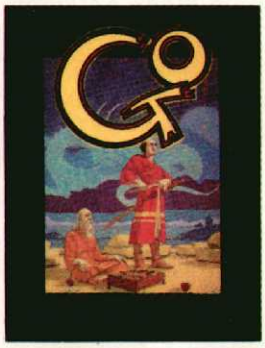

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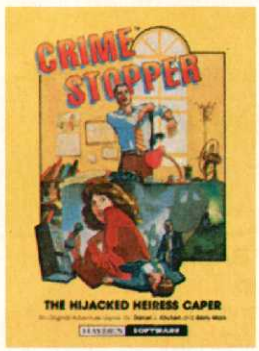

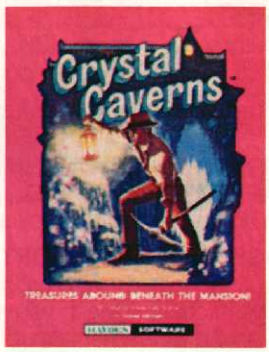

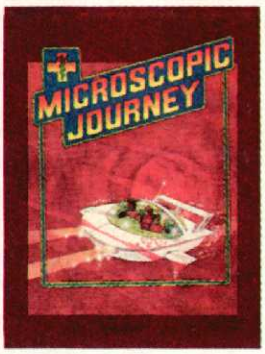

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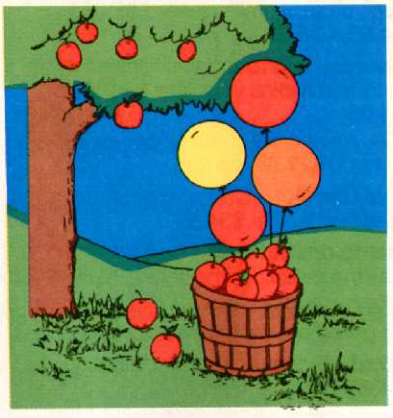

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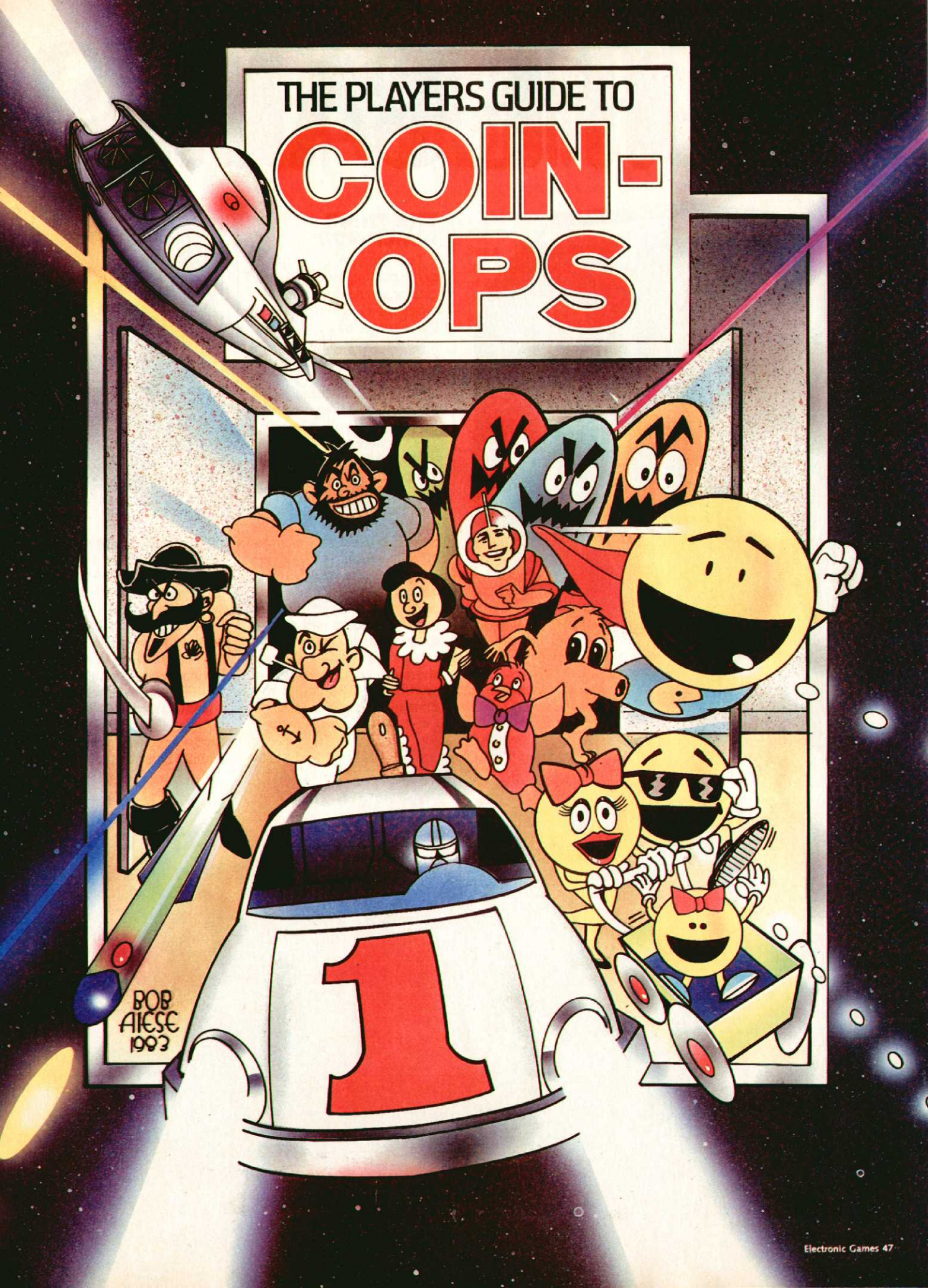

THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO
COIN-OPS
BOB AIESE 1983

SCIENCE FICTION: THE GAMES

SUBROC-3D

THE THIRD DIMENSION

The illusion of depth is perhaps the most difficult graphic simulation a computer programmer can create. From the earliest days of vector graphics, with its crystalline linework, the designers of coin-ops have attempted to add a sense of distance and perspective to their creations.

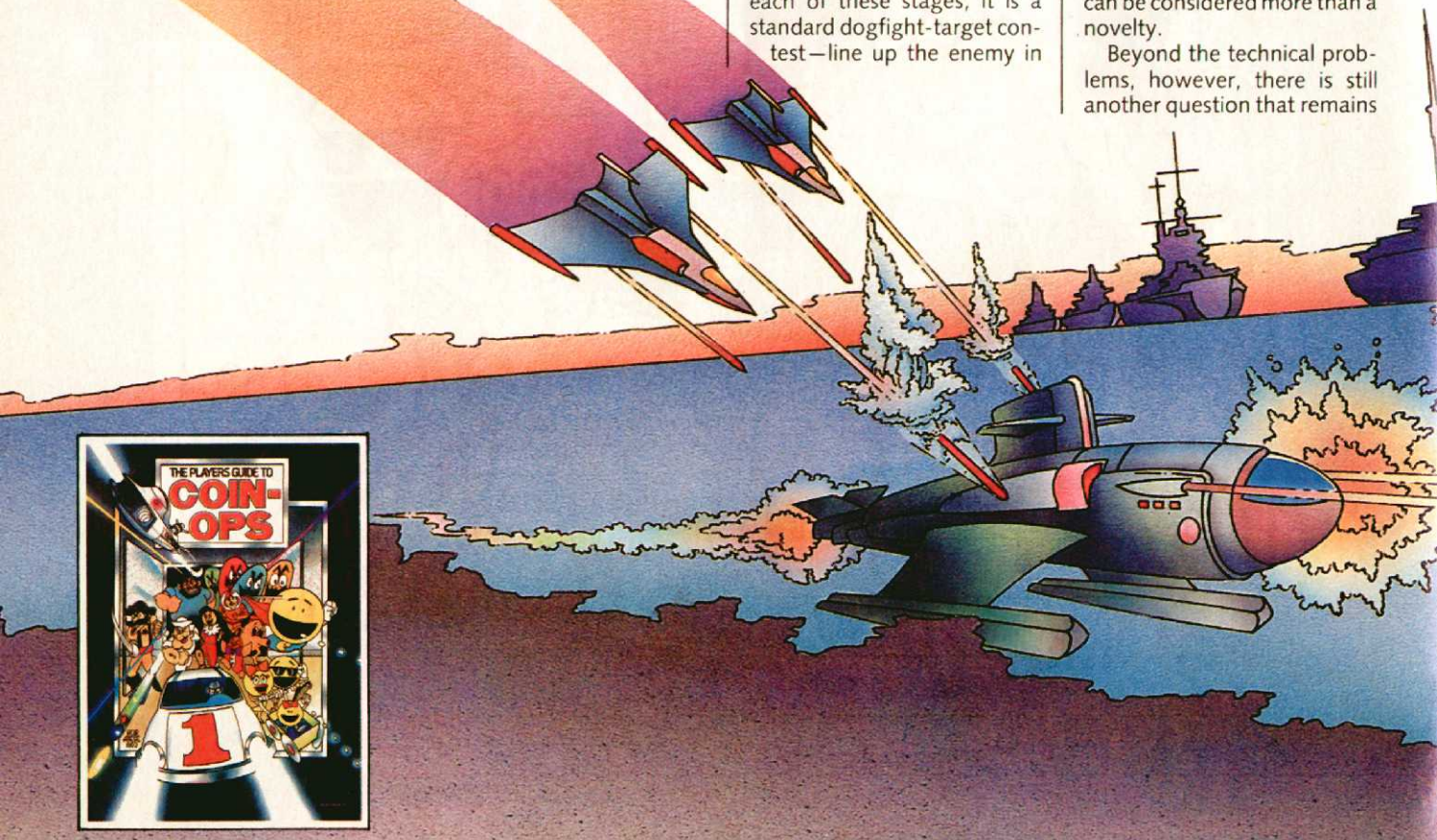
A couple of games boasting "3-D" capability have been showcased recently, Sega's **Subroc-3D** and Stern's **Dark Planet**. Unfortunately, the only thing these games seem to prove is that the game designers have yet to master the third dimension.

Subroc presents a flickering imitation of distance that doesn't fool the eye for an instant. A weird, scarab-shaped space craft, the Subroc, can engage the enemy in the sky, at sea level or underwater. In each of these stages, it is a standard dogfight-target contest—line up the enemy in the crosshair and blast away.

DARK PLANET

Dark Planet, on the other hand, offers an artificial lunar landscape as part of the game cabinet's interior, while a rather ordinary videogame is projected beneath it. It looks like videogame designers have a way to go before 3-D can be considered more than a novelty.

Beyond the technical problems, however, there is still another question that remains



OF TOMORROW

to be answered. Games requiring "scope" sighting devices rarely sell in arcades, where players like to stand around and watch other gamers before consigning their token to a coin-op's insatiable maw. Three-D and other "total environment" games, which completely enclose the participant within the game itself, will radically alter the ambiance of the arcade — should they ever develop to that level of popularity.

Actually, 3-D games are at a rather awkward stage just now. The technology is still not quite up to the dreams of the coin-op game designers, with the result that a stickler for accuracy might quibble about whether any pay-for-play machine is truly three-dimensional at this time. With the way that breakthroughs keep coming in the hardware field, though, it may not be too long before the coin-op companies can cross this threshhold.

BUCK ROGERS ZOOMS THROUGH SPACE

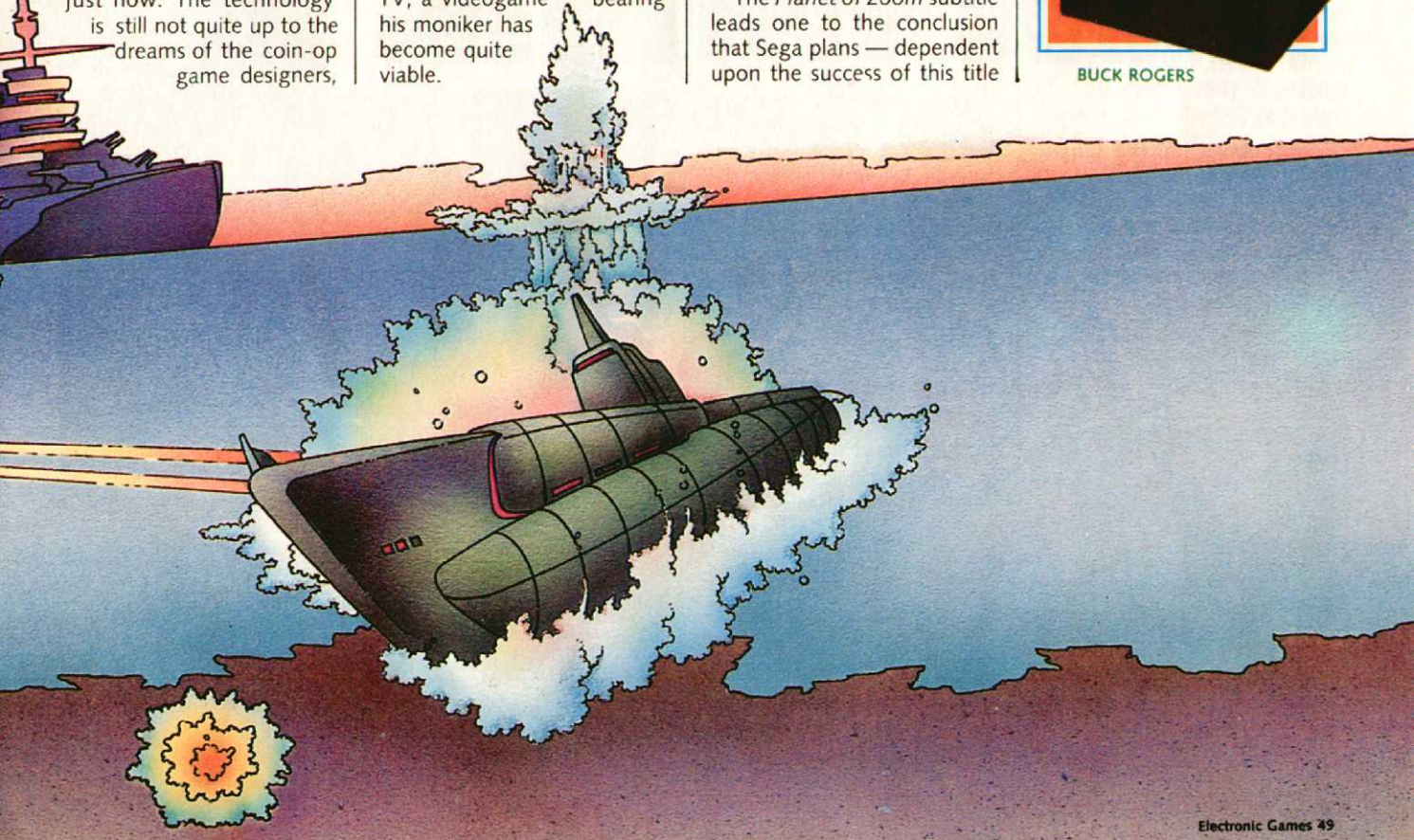
With the return to prominence of Buck Rogers, space adventurer and cosmic swashbuckler of the first order, via two seasons of prime-time TV, a videogame bearing his moniker has become quite viable.

The company that caught the tail of Buck's comet is Sega. The company's eye-splashing **Buck Rogers, Planet of Zoom** evokes the image of the hero quite effectively. Not only is *Zoom* the aptly named body in the cosmos, but this first-person cockpit contest is the most visually gripping new coin-op this season.

This is a multi-scenario game, but the real thrills come during the "trench" scene. During this phase, the arader must pilot his ship through a maze-like death valley, encountering huge "floaters", biped space ships, which must be dodged with hairpin accuracy. As might be expected, the action heats up as play continues.

The *Planet of Zoom* subtitle leads one to the conclusion that Sega plans — dependent upon the success of this title naturally, — an entire series revolving around the space pioneer whose broken cosmic

BUCK ROGERS



alarm clock awakens him in a far-future war zone.

This seems only fitting, in view of the hero's longevity, as a series star in other media.

ATARI'S LATEST SF: FOR SUPER-GAMERS

Someone at the Atari coin-op lab has obviously discovered a mission in life: testing the skills of the top arcaders to the limit, dispensing with the arcade novice in a matter of seconds. The so-called "players' games," designed to challenge the top-echelon players, is growing in popularity by the minute. Cases in point: **Quantum** and **Liberator**, Atari's shiny new coin-ops are a pair of videogames that make **Defender** look like child's play by comparison.

BUCK ROGERS

Following directly on the heels of the tremendously challenging **Gravitar** comes *Quantum*, yet another contest employing the highly sophisticated thruster-style play mechanic. This contest dares you to fly rings around your outer space targets, encircling them as a means of capture. Again, Quadrascan graphics are called in to play to leave a clear after-trail that doesn't fade — sort of sky-writing in space.

Liberator, meanwhile, utilizes the most magnificent graphics seen on any of the new Atari science-fiction games — and we're dealing with some heavy hitters in that line-up — to create a rescue contest that inaugurates the adventures of the Atari Force. The Force is a group of

The Coin-Op ADVENTURE

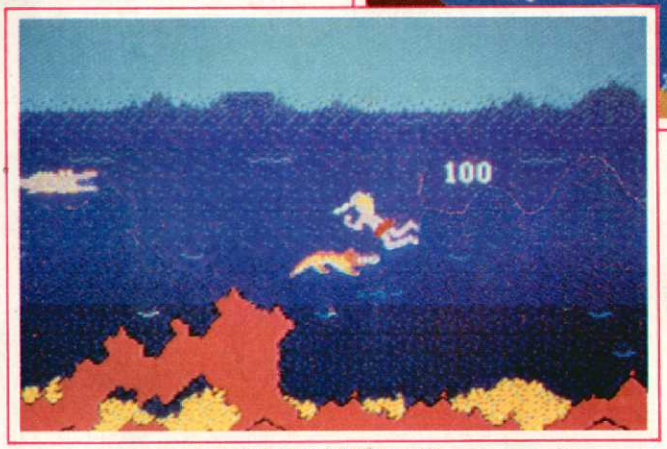
KING OF THE PIRATES

So popular has the **Jungle Hunt** concept proven — moving to the top 10 in the coin-op charts with the proverbial bullet — that a second game using a virtual duplicate of the original's play mechanic has been introduced in a clever, plastic disguise.

Pirate King is the same type of swing-from-the-masts-and-swim-the-ocean adventure as *Jungle Hunt*, but the characters are pirates and the setting is, of course, the open sea with galleons galore. The hero swings from mast to mast in quest of his ultimate goal.

THROUGH THE JUNGLE

This is the year the coin-ops go swashbuckler, with jungle safaris, medieval quests and

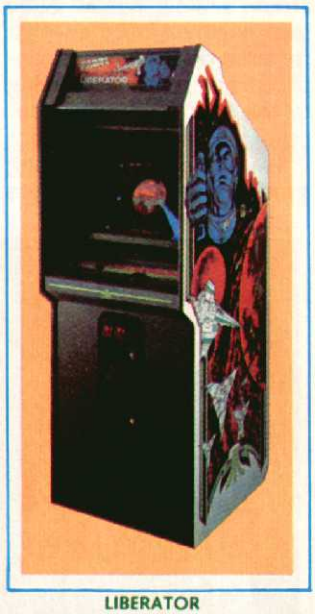


ORIGINAL JUNGLE KING

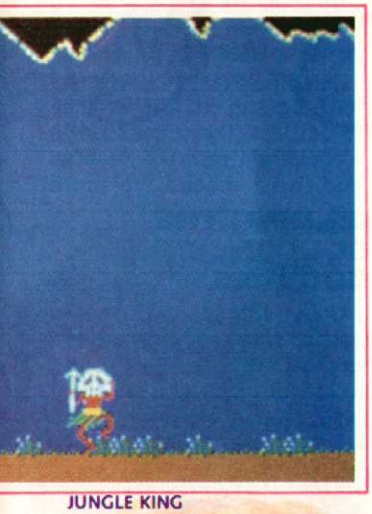
QUANTUM

costumed, comic book heros produced in concert with another Warner Communications property, DC Comics. Several Atari Force adventures have already appeared in comic book form in both DC-produced comics (such as the Superman/House of Mystery saga in January's *DC Comics Presents*) for newsstand sales and in specially published smaller-sized booklets enclosed in specially marked Atari 2600 home games.

The comic hasn't hit its stride yet, but the top talent behind it promises the best is still ahead.



LIBERATOR



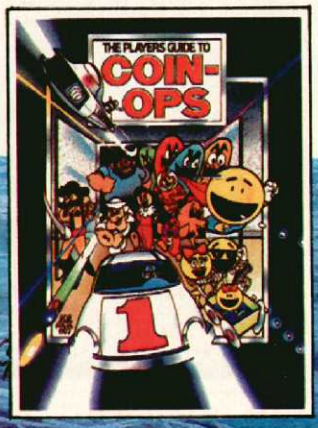
JUNGLE KING

pirate voyages multiplying in the game parlors. The trend started with Taito's **Jungle King**, in which a jungle lord in loincoth swings from vine to vine, swims crocodile-infested waters, and scales trees, in order to rescue a fair maiden from cannibals.

Problem: the Edgar Rice Burrough's Estate — holders of all rights pertaining to Tarzan — screamed bloody murder. After some retooling, the game was miraculously reborn as **Jungle Hunt**. It's the same game, but with the hero metamorphosized into a white hunter in pith helmet.

SINBAD, WITCHES AND WIZARDS

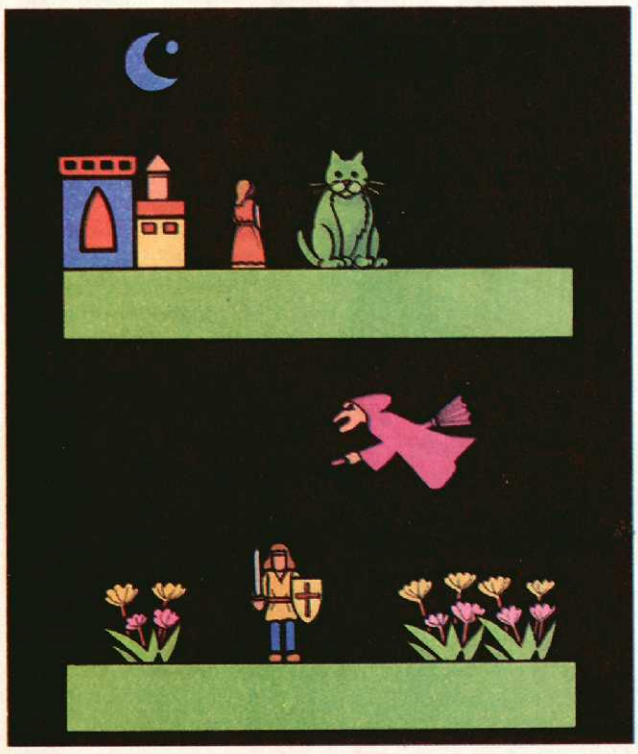
Several new titles are banking on the arcade salability of the multi-scenario adventure

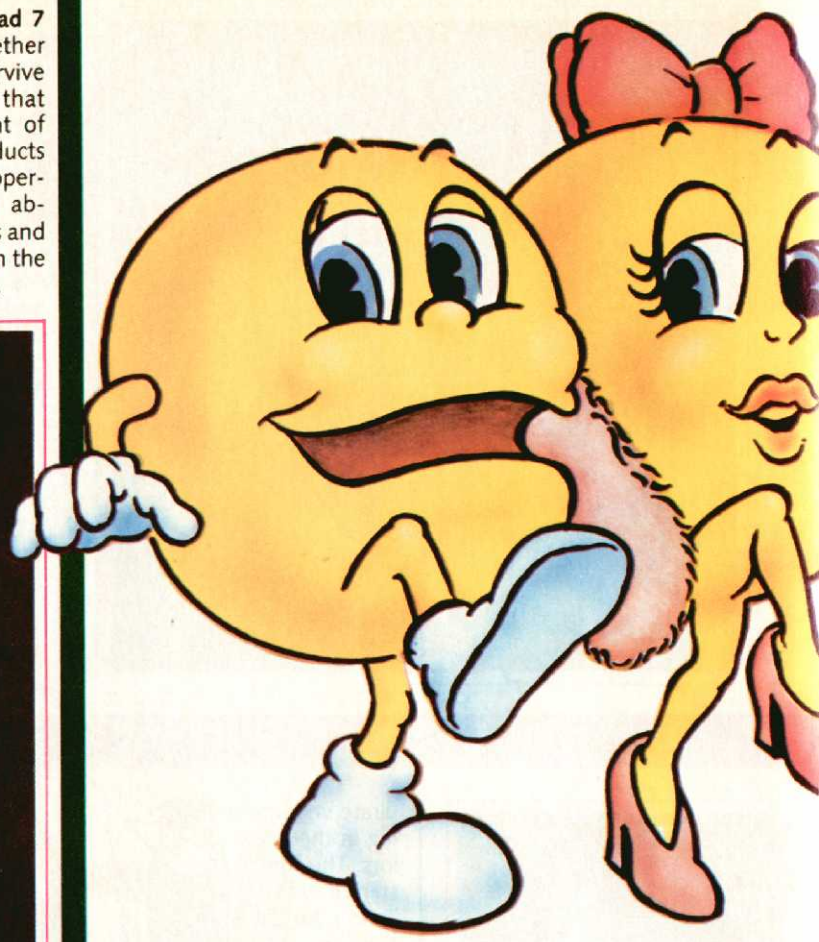


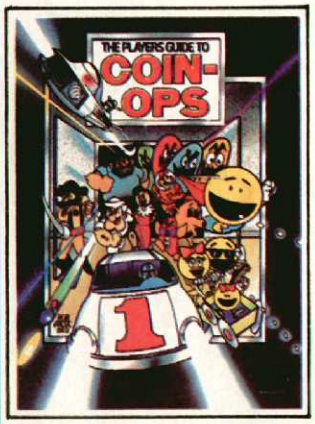
theme. Traditionally, a good adventure took too long to finish to be profitable in an arcade setting, but as game time lengthens and the search for more diverse themes continues, companies are turning to the traditional quest concept to attract an audience.

Two of the most interesting games, in terms of graphics and play value, are **Sinbad 7** and **Witch's Way**. Whether these offbeat titles can survive the coin-op shake-out that seems inevitable, in light of the huge amount of products confronting players and operators, will tell us alot about the future of coin-ops and what we will be playing in the arcades in a year or two.

WITCH'S WAY







THE SUPERHITS

The surest sign that a game has made it, is the release of a "deluxe edition" or sequel. A deluxe edition is, essentially, the same contest with enough variation to eliminate any strategic tricks developed by the best players, while providing superior sound and graphics to add to the fun. Unlike out-and-out sequels, such as **Stargate** (following **Defender**) and **Donkey Kong Jr.** (which continues the saga of the great Nintendo gorilla), special editions are more of a salute to a particular game's success.

GILDING THE GOLDEN GOBBLER

Undeniably the most successful coin-op in arcade history, **Pac-Man** continues to inspire variations on the theme from Midway's factories. The most interesting of the three new *Pac*-titles previewed recently for the electronic gaming press is undeniably the offspring of the group, **Pac-Baby.** The gobblin' toddler game is the first true hybrid video-pinball game — that is, the play on the screen is affected by what happens on the table.

For more information on this unique crossbreed, check out an upcoming installment of "Pinball Palace" in **EG.**

Super Pac-Man is a maze chase contest of another stripe. It features widely separated fruit and other objects of the gobbler's gastronomical desire. You've got to play this one to realize how truly offbeat it really is! *Super Pac-Man's* a genuine departure from from

DELUXING
The Coin-Ops

maze-chase games of the past. Finally, there's the first official factory-authorized enhancement kit, **Pac-Man Plus**. This upgrade is manna from heaven for Pac-Maniacs who have pattern-played the original one into the ground. The ghosts are faster and more random, the maze disappears, monsters become invisible and an entire jack-in-the-box full of extra surprises, awaits.

He eats and eats — but he just keeps on going.

SON OF ZAXXON

The most startling game graphically, of 1982 was Sega's **Zaxxon.** Its three-quarters perspective and incredible simulation of depth makes it something to see, but more than a little difficult to play. With the coming of the Coleco home versions, however, gamers are learning the strategies and becoming more familiar with this eye-popping quarter-snatcher.

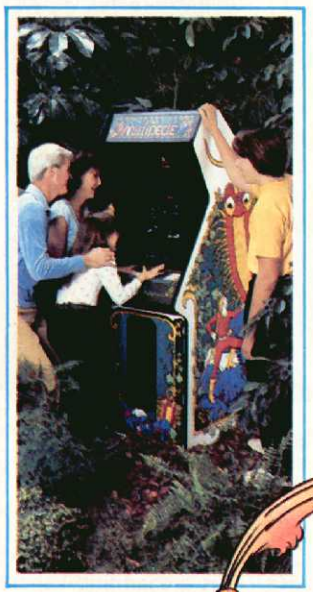
So successful is *Zaxxon*, that a deluxe version, appropriately dubbed **Super Zaxxon** will soon hit arcades. Boasting even more vivid colors and dramatic imagery, it also offers an even more challenging test of the arcader's skills. Dramatic, pulsing colors have replaced the paste dimensionality of the original with spectacular explosions and outer space scenes.

If you loved the original, you'll have to give this one a shot. And another, and another, and. . .

SUPER ZAXXON

STAM-PEDE

Atari struck coin-op gold with its vertical blast-up **Centipede.** The California manufacturer obviously felt it deserved a follow-up, and has dubbed it **Millipede**. It's even more intriguing than the original, while boasting a melange of new and familiar characters.



MILLIPEDE

The most significant change is the downward-scrolling mushroom field and the beetle, who poses a most perplexing problem. If you destroy the beetle, the field scrolls down a notch. If you fail to do so, the bug begins passing over mushrooms, transforming them into indestructable flowers.

There are earwigs and bug spray and an assortment of new touches that should enthrall die-hard Centipeders.

Those who want a fuller description of this enticing new game can find a thorough run down in this issue's "Insert Coin Here" coin-op machine review column.

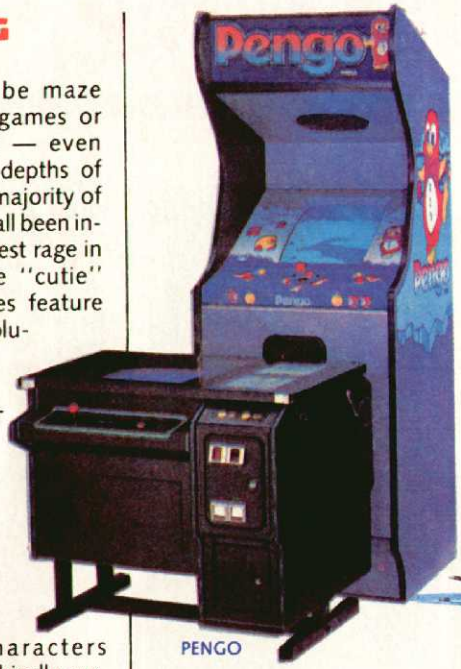
COIN-OP

A-MAZE-ING CUTIES

Whether they be maze chases, jumping games or climbing contests — even shoot-outs in the depths of the cosmos — the majority of new coin-ops have all been interbred with the latest rage in arcadeland — the "cutie" game. Cutie games feature great graphics, resolution, whimsical, adorable characters, and an irresistible attraction to stacks of quarters and tokens.

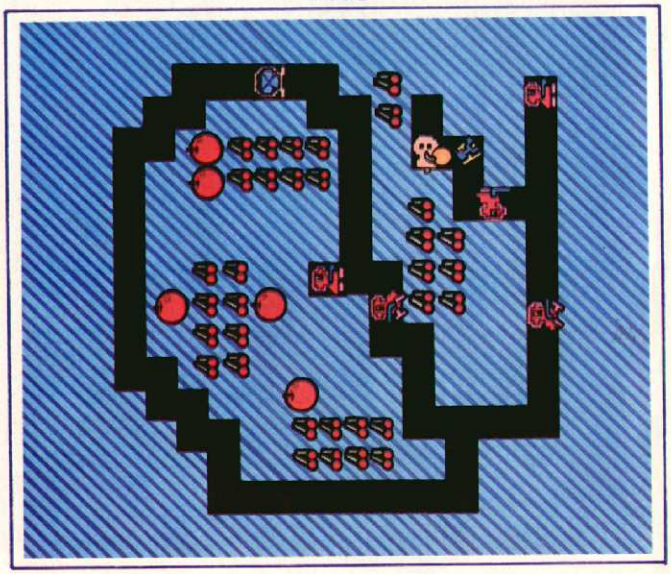
These machines are designed around a simple concept: if the action is adorable enough, the characters charming and graphically cartoonish enough, you can't lose. If it's a great game, the bells and whistles are an added kick. If the game is only so-so, the whole thing is cute enough that, well, who cares?

Maze games are especially susceptible to the cute-ization process. **Eyes** from Rockola, **Mr. Do** out of Universal and several other titles use familiar play mechanics. For instance, *Mr. Do* is a charming variant of the gobble, dig and cute concepts.



PENGO

Perhaps the most successful is Sega's **Pengo**, which stars a fetching little penguin being chased around a maze consisting of ice blocks. The kicker: *Pengo* is able to alter the topography of the maze by sliding the blocks into new positions, even trapping his adversaries when the job's done well.


MR. DO

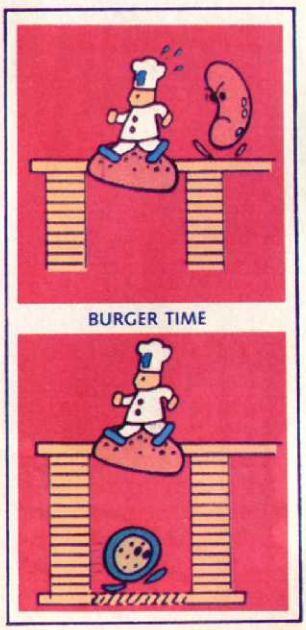
F. LEA COIN-OP

Okay, imagine Midway's **Tron**, only instead of lightcycles and tank mazes, you've got dogs and fleas in a quartet of contests. Weird. Definitely. The latest videogame from Pacific Novelty (creators of **Thief** — a Certificate of Merit Arcade Award winner for best coin-op audio/visual effects — and several other games) is called *F. Lea*. While there's nothing new about it, it's charming ambiance makes it worth a try.

The player can choose any of the four games, all of which are take-offs on the existing machines. Fleas do the Tarzan-thing, for example, in their own, unique fashion. Instead of swinging from grape vines, the indomitable F. Lea leaps from dog to dog by way of their tails.

SHORT ORDER COOKING

Midway's **Burger Time** approaches the cute game from an entirely different direction. Remember that old bit with the conveyor belt carrying the food, which had to


BURGER TIME

CUTIES!

be placed down, layer upon layer? *Burger Time* emulates that notion to a certain degree by asking the gamer to create the fattest, most mouth-watering hamburger imaginable.

First comes the roll, then the burger — and then the play gets really serious. The foodstuff continues to scroll across the bottom of the screen with points awarded for every hamburger completed. The more relish, onions, etc. laid down, the more points.

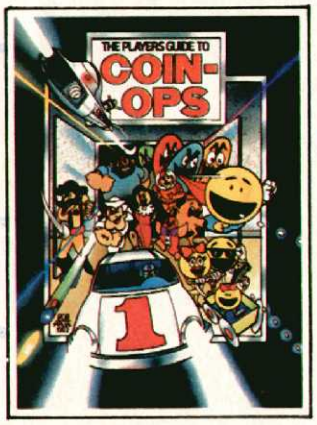
Burger Time relies more on a cute "concept" as opposed to cute execution. The characters here are no Saturday morning wonders, but the idea itself will sell this game. And in a world ruled by McDonalds, who's to say what will happen?

Q* BERT'S CUBES

Perhaps the best blend of whimsical characters and solid, innovative game play, however, is to be found in Gottlieb's enchanting latest, **Q*Bert**, the home rights to which have already been snapped up by Parker Brothers.

Q*Bert is a furry little creature with a snorkle-snout whose arena consists of a pyramid of colored cubes. Little Q*Bert can jump from cube-top to cube-top, and each jump triggers a color change running through a full rainbow sequence. The object is to turn all the cube-tops the same color. The difficulty lies in an assortment of snakes and other disreputables that scamper around the pyramid-like maze in search of Q*Bert. If they catch him, he loses a life and starts again.

The excellent meshing of enchanting game characters, gorgeous graphics and good, full-bodied game play make *Q*Bert* a solid entry in the world of the coin-op cuties.

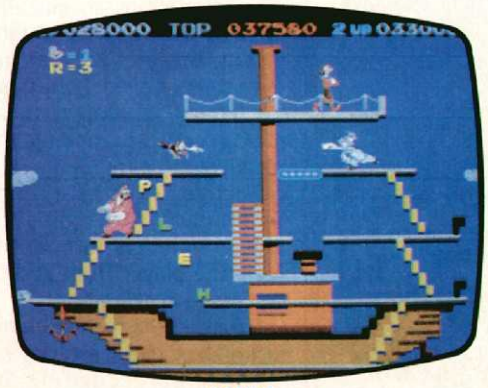


POPEYE GOES COIN-OP

America's most famous old salt has finally turned up in a coin-op game, with all the friends from the original newspaper strip by Segar — Whimpy, Bluto, Olive and even the Sea Hag.

Olive stands at the top of a multi-level playfield divided by short stairways and tosses hearts that the one-eyed sailor, Popeye, most catch. Flies in the ointment naturally include Bluto, who can only be vanquished by having Popeye down one of the strategically placed cans of spinach and gaining temporary super strength.

The animation and sound are flat-out cartoon-quality, and though the game play may not engross gamers from start to finish, the visual magic does. Nintendo looks to have one of the hottest new titles around with **Popeye** — a game too cute to fail.

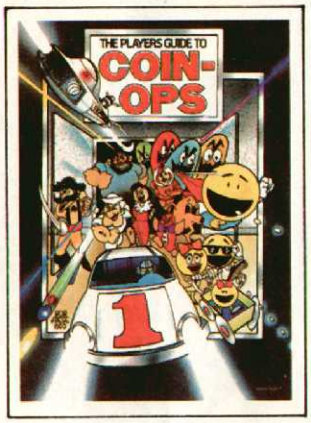


POPEYE

POPEYE

On the Ground and in the Air...

Driving & Flying Coin-Ops



FLYING THROUGH TIME AND SPACE!

The concept of the immortal soldier is as old as armed conflict itself. With each new call to arms, he rises from his grave, takes up the armaments of war and fulfills his endless duty — battle through time itself.

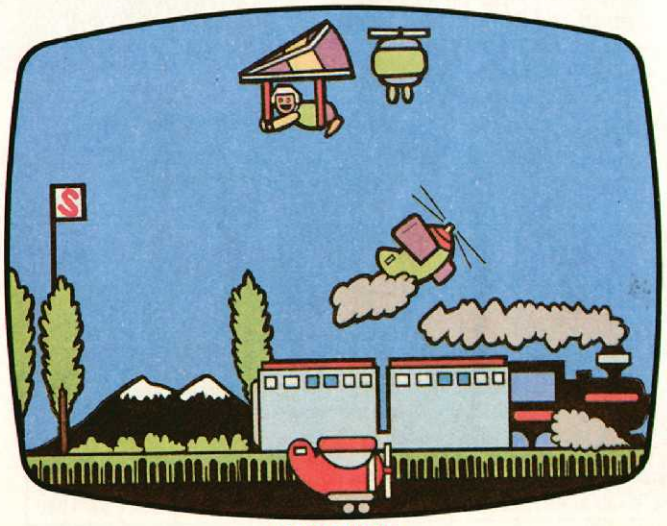
Certainly the most offbeat of the new shoot-outs is Centuri's **Time Pilot**, in which a combination Red Baron and flying Dutchman engage in decade-spanning warfare in the sky.

The contest begins with the most primitive type of aerial warfare — the World War I circa dogfight. Using joystick controls and totally authentic firing techniques, you move through progressively futuristic modes of the traditional dogfight.

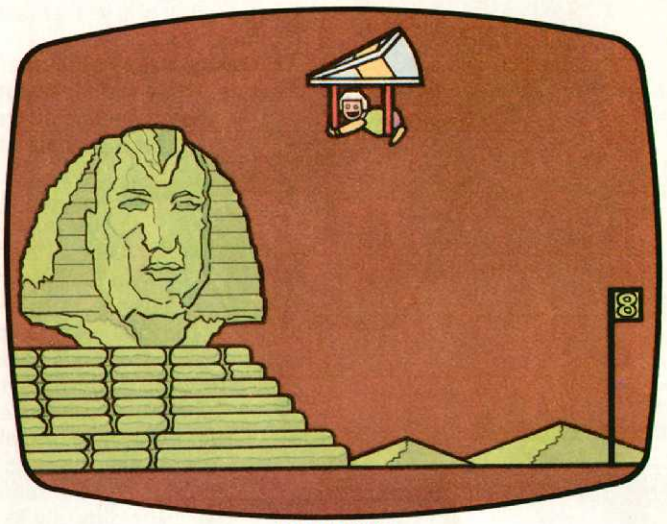
World War II fighters, MiGs vs. US Tiger jets, Vietnam-era sky combat and, ultimately: war in space! *Time Pilot* is not only an excellent action game, but a visual history of air warfare.

FLOATING THROUGH THE SEVEN WONDERS

Fast Freddie from Atari is quite a guy. He loves to travel, and his favorite mode of locomotion is hang-gliding. In a multi-scenario graphic wonderland, arcaders guide Eddie over treacherous terrain in search of the most wonderful sights on earth. Whether he's wafting over the Sphinx, cruising the Taj Majal or skiing the Alps, *Fast Freddie* is fast, fun and the perfect change-of-pace coin-op experience.



FAST FREDDIE



FAST FREDDIE

Points are gathered simply by keeping ol' Eddie afloat — but as most players discover, this is definitely easier said than done. So get your wings ready, and do some *real* sightseeing.

POSITION IS EVERYTHING IN LIFE

Sega's phenomenal success with **Turbo** has revived a game genre that was previously considered dead as a dodo.

Inspired by the newfound interest, Atari has created the most graphically spectacular, realistic first-person driving videogame any arcader has ever seen. Called **Pole Position**, this is a straight-ahead racing contest, making the passing of cars being the objective, with everything from curbs to road signs available in numbers sufficient to keep the player from getting too much acceleration.

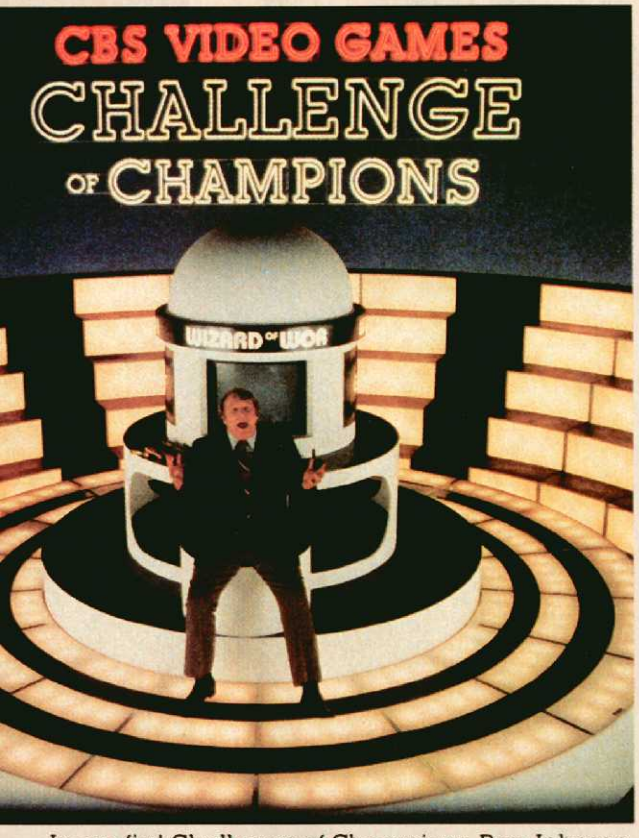
Whether the driving games can make it in the arcades will probably be decided by this game.

THE COIN-OP "SLUMP" AND YOU

Don't be alarmed by anything you may hear about a "coin-op slump". Actually, popularity of the games has never been higher — and it's still growing. What *has* happened is that the increase in the number of machines installed in arcade and street locations has increased faster than the coin-op audience, resulting in somewhat lower per-machine earnings figures, and a corresponding reluctance by operators to buy quite as many new titles as there were a year ago.

For arcaders, this means that there will be a short-term slowdown in the appearance of new machines. Yet consumers are likely to benefit in the long run, because manufacturers will essentially give up trying to market the "me, too" machines and stress innovation, to attract the notice of operators, and ultimately, the players.

Winning at 'Wizard of Wor' and 'Gorf.' By John Madden.



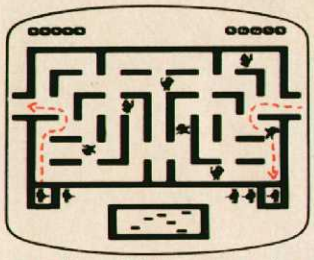
In our first Challenge of Champions, Ray Johnson of Los Angeles defeated Tony Sarkis of New York and David Hayes, a student at Cal Tech, defeated Brian Anderson, a student at MIT.

As the sportscaster for CBS Video Games, I get a chance to watch some of the best players in the country in the "Challenge of Champions."

Here are some of their winning strategies.

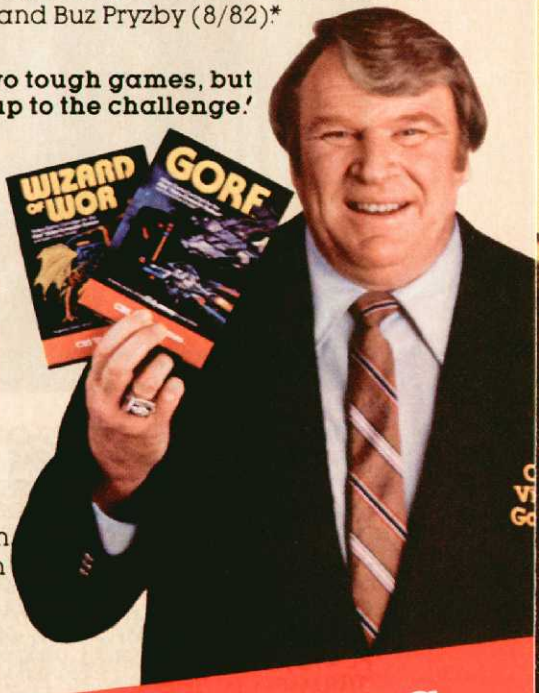
Wizard of Wor™: You start with three worriors. The object of this game is to defeat the Wizard, his henchmen and your opponent. This is a game you can play alone, or two can play simultaneously. When two play, you have to worry about getting zapped by your opponent as well as the Wizard, and his gang.

Here's an interesting move you might want to try. Get out into the maze fast, zip out of the escape door, come back in through the opposite side. If you're quick enough, you'll be in perfect position to blitz your opponent's three worriors before they can score any points. The ultimate shutout.



Another variation is to work together. Make a pact not to hit each other (accidents do happen, of course) and go for the record score: 99,500 by Frank Merollo (10/82) and Buz Pryzby (8/82).*

'These are two tough games, but I know you're up to the challenge.'



Gorf™ is four boards in one game. Your father will enjoy this game because with a little luck, he'll be able to go through the four boards a couple of times, but after the third level it starts to get faster...and faster.

Coaching tips: patience

Stick & move

Get position

Hit it high

That's when you separate the players from the parents. You start out aggressively and after 10,000 points the bombs and torpedoes start to come hot and heavy, so be prepared to change to a defensive game plan.

The record high score is still 32,700 by Horace Eckerstrom (9/82),* which gives you some idea of how hard this game is.

Both Wizard of Wor and Gorf are made for the Atari® 2600 System.™ (Look for Intellivision® versions soon.) They're really tough, and the more you play them, the more you'll like them.

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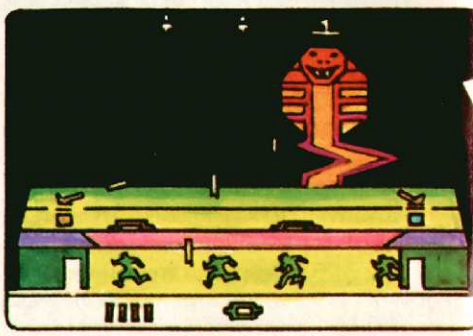
*High scores as of this printing.

CBS Video Games
Are you up to the challenge?

COBRA IS LOOKING FOR A FEW BAD MEN.

COMMAND THE FORCES OF ***DARKNESS*** AND ***EVIL***... ***OR*** THE HEROIC DEFENDERS OF ***RIGHT*** AND ***JUSTICE***. IT'S YOUR CHOICE, WITH THE NEW ***G.I. JOE VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE***. YOU CAN BE THE COBRA COMMANDER, DIRECTING THE GIANT COBRA ROBOT, BEAMING ***LASER BLASTS*** AND ***VENOM BOMBS*** AGAINST YOUR UNRELENTING FOE G.I. JOE. OR AS G.I. JOE YOU FIGHT FOR THE GOOD OF MANKIND ERECTING ***LASER SHIELDS*** AND POUNDING THE EVIL COBRA WITH ***MENACING MISSILES***. YOU CAN PLAY AGAINST THE COMPUTER, OR TAKE ON ONE OR TWO OTHER PLAYERS. WILL COBRA WIN THE BATTLE, OR WILL THE GOOD GUYS TRIUMPH IN THE END? IT'S UP TO YOU. ***ENLIST*** TODAY!



COMING SOON **G.I. JOE** A REAL AMERICAN HERO!™

G.I. JOE IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN.

JOIN THE *COURAGEOUS RANKS* OF THE G.I. JOE RAPID-DEPLOYMENT TEAM... *OR* SINK TO NEW DEPTHS OF *VILENESS* AND *EVIL*. IT'S YOUR CHOICE, WITH THE NEW *G.I. JOE VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE*. AS G.I. JOE, YOU ATTACK THE INSIDIOUS COBRA FORCES WITH *MENACING MISSILES*, WHILE PROTECTED BY *LASER SHIELDS*. OR PLAY AS COBRA COMMANDER STRUGGLING FOR WORLD DOMINATION WITH *LASER BLASTS* AND *VENOM BOMBS*. TAKE ON THE COMPUTER, OR ONE OR TWO OTHER PLAYERS. FOR GOOD OR BAD, RIGHT OR WRONG, THE *FATE OF THE WORLD* IS IN YOUR HANDS.

For your Atari Video Computer System™ and Sears Video Arcade™

PARKER BROTHERS *THE ONES TO BEAT*

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COMPUTER

AZTEC

Datamost/Apple II/48K disk

Here's your chance to follow in the footsteps of globe-trotting adventurers like Alan Quartermain and Indiana Jones. **Aztec** is a high-resolution action adventure in which the solo player must penetrate to the depths of an ancient temple, retrieve a priceless idol and bring it safely back to civilization so you can sell it for a hefty fee.

The program generates the temple by picking eight floors of eight rooms, each chamber containing up to three levels. Since there are 32 possible arrangements of the floors, *Aztec* offers players a satisfying variety. Or to put it another way, if you can't solve one version of the temple, you can always begin the quest again with another.

The gamer controls the on-screen character with the keyboard. There are two modes, regular movement and fight/attack, each with its own group of one-key commands. Under ordinary conditions, the well-drawn digital explorer can walk, run, change direction, set a dynamite charge, crawl, jump and climb. Pushing "F" sends the character into fight mode, in which condition he can inch forward, step back and spin around, draw a weapon (gun or machete), lunge or slash with the blade, or fire the pistol. Though it sounds like a lot of keys to memorize, the process isn't all that hard. After a few games at the lowest of the eight possible skill levels, you'll have your soldier of fortune leaping chasms, climbing winding staircases, and battling the 10 different monster types which guard the temple.

The maze and all figures within it are seen in profile, with one room visible on the screen at a time. This keeps suspense at a high level during the game, because a player never knows what he or she will find in the next section until the on-screen hero actually gets there.

GAMING

Search the Sacred Aztec Temple for the Jade Idol, But Beware of the Guards!

When in the movement mode, the adventurer must search through piles of rubble and the chests which dot the maze-like temple. Many contain nothing, but sometimes you may find a strength-building elixir, weapons (bullets must be found separately from the pistol) and the coveted idol. Dynamite is one of the powerful weapons at your command, capable of blasting a hole through walls or floors at need. Two warnings: Get away from the blast area quickly, and don't blow up things you may need on the trip toward the temple's exit. It's no good finding the idol if it can't be brought out of its resting place.

The procedure for setting a dynamite charge is not sufficiently explained in the brief rules folder. This can cause a lot of frustration for those who don't stumble on the fairly simple routine. All you have to do is set the little guy on the screen crawling and then, when his hand is extended in front of him, push "P" to set and light the explosive. At times, quick action with the dynamite is the only way to get out of one of the trap rooms or defeat the more powerful creatures which bar the way to the trophy you seek.

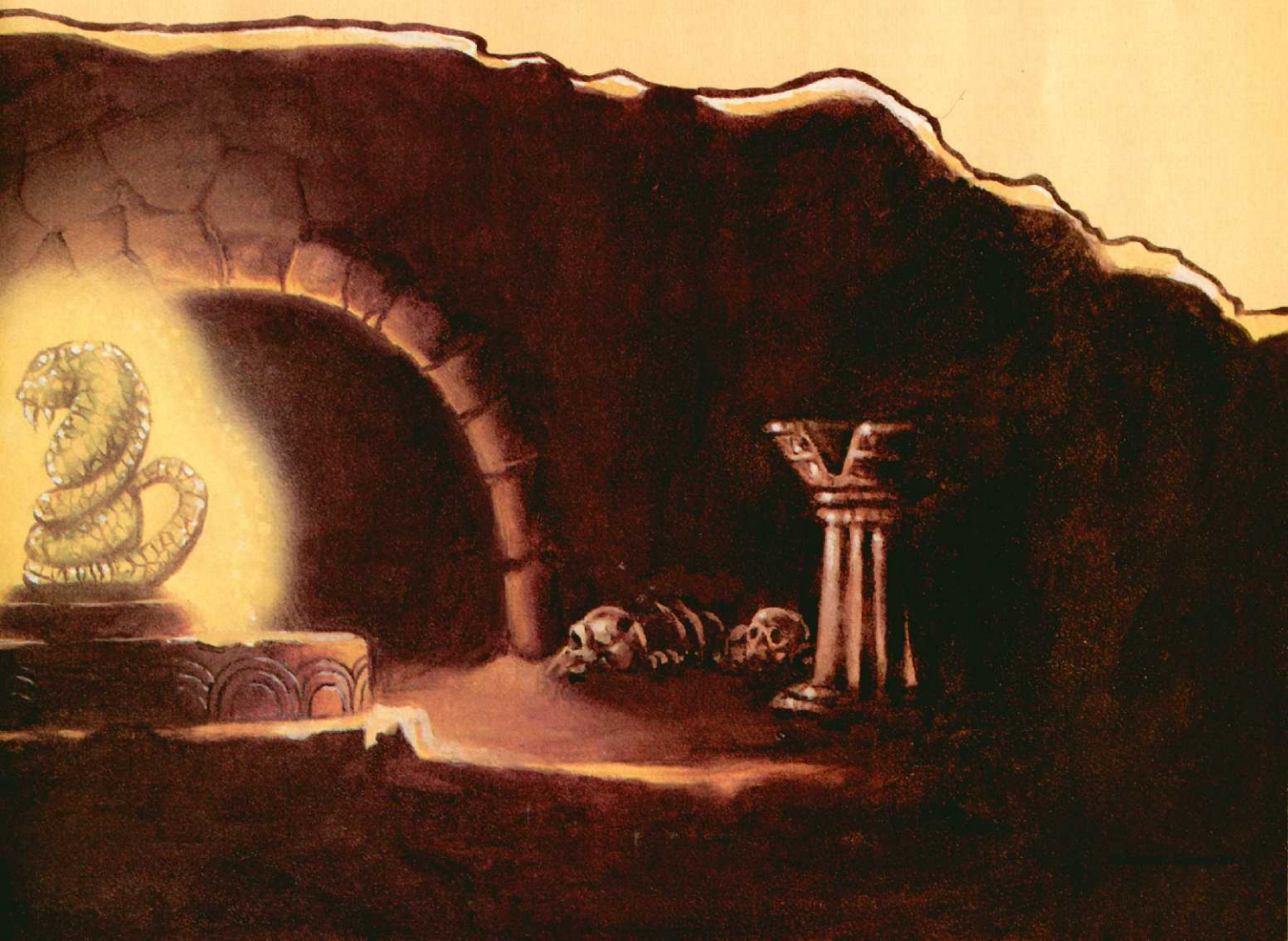
Despite some superficial similarities to Muse Software's **Castle Wolfenstein**, Datamost's Paul Stephenson has given adventure gamers something new — and delightful — in *Aztec*. The variety of monsters and traps, the range of possible commands and the attractive graphics make this one of *the* computer gaming events of the year. It's the kind of contest you want to play again immediately after you finish the last round.

(Steve Davidson)

ASTRO CHASE

First Star Software/Atari 400 & 800 32K

First Star is a new company named after the highly-prized master of the



First intermission for Astro Chase

Initial view of the solar system in Astro Chase

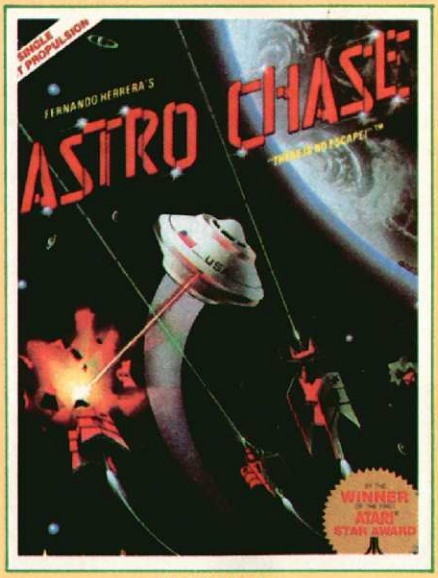
Atari computer, Fernando Herrera, winner of the First Star Award from the Sunnyvale company itself. It has released its first game — and, wow, is it something else!

Astro Chase requires something closer to a book than a review in order to explore all the nooks and crannies of its ground-breaking design.

As the computer plays the "1812 Overture", we see a beautifully rendered Earth street with a saucer parked outside the house closest to the foreground. A door opens, and from the house steps an astro-fighter in his mylar space-garb. He moves underneath the parked spaceship, where a tractor beam lifts the warrior into the craft itself. It blasts off, and the first phase of the battle begins. This is but one of *seven* different intermissions between each battle.

Your mission sounds simple: Defend the Earth. It isn't. Among the various types of spacecraft you must fend off are Ramatrons, Firetrons, Ramalons, Firelons, and jet versions of all four. But remember your prime directive; keep those gravity-drawn space mines from reaching — and blowing up — the planet of which we are all so fond. Some of these beggars can actually travel through planets!

Sound grim? It is, but the gamer *does* have some healthy defensive weaponry. There is, of course, your saucer, which is capable of what First Star has dubbed "single thrust propulsion" — a technique which allows the player to steer the ship in one direction and fire in another — *any* other, in fact. Shields can be activated, and energy grids are available to resupply fuel. It's even possible to trap an enemy craft between two parallel



ASTRO CHASE

planets, where it will bounce back and forth forever.

There are an astounding *36* skill levels in this game and omnidirectional scrolling, but the real beauty of *Astro Chase* is the *beauty* of it. It is perhaps the most graphically magnificent computer videogame yet created. Fernando Herrera is more like a painter than a typical graphic designer, and it shows. The solar system and the intermissions are breathtaking.

First Star does, indeed, have a star on its hands, and many more games like this will make this fledgeling outfit shine all the brighter.

(Bill Kunkel)

BAJA BUGGIES

Gamestar/Atari 400 & 800/16K

Put flat-out, this is the best racing contest, in terms of graphics and game play, ever designed for a computer system. **Baja Buggies** is a reincarnation of **Night Rally** from the now-defunct software house, Arcade Plus (which gained fame and fortune with the gobble game, **Ghost Hunter**). Arcade Plus may have bitten the dust, but the night race game it developed has survived admirably, all spiffed up with balloon tires and a daytime desert landscape.

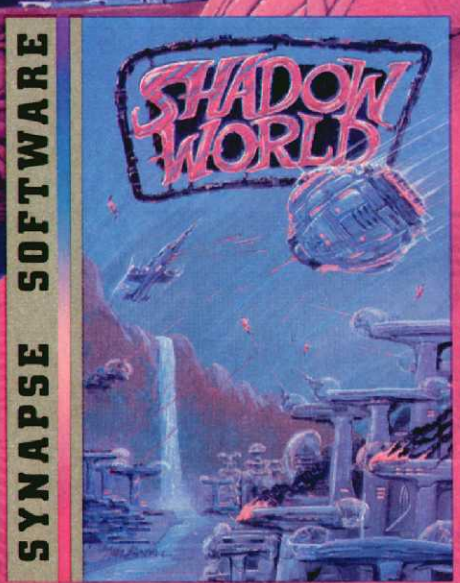
Designed for Gamestar by Dan Ugrin, *Baja Buggies* is a perfect example of what can be accomplished with a mere 16K on the Atari computers. The landscape and horizon line scroll subtly, clouds shifting position with every snake-like twist of the road. The play-action is miraculous.

Discarding as it does the traditional paddle controller used for most driving games in lieu of a joystick, *Baja* is an anomaly. First-time participants are invariably impressed with the graphics and the sense of realistic drifting motion built into the program. But it's only when the arcader actually grabs hold of the wheel — er, joystick — that the marvelous playability and realism of the game become crystal clear. In other words, this one looks good — but it plays *great*.

This is position racing, and the object is to use the top-mounted radar scanner to determine both your location and the leader's — be he the notorious Mario Sandduni, the loveable A.J. Cactus or the reckless Parnelli Pothole — and pass as many other dunies as possible to reach the front-runner.

One gripe is that when you ultimately *do* reach the head of the pack, you just might expect skyrockets and fireworks, but instead — pfffffft. Ah, well, we *are* picking nits, I suppose.

CONJURE UP SOME FUN...



Available in disk, cassette and cartridge for the Atari 400/800 computers.

These and other titles available soon for the Commodore 64, the VIC-20, TI-99/4A, Apple II, Radio Shack Color Computer, and IBM-PC.

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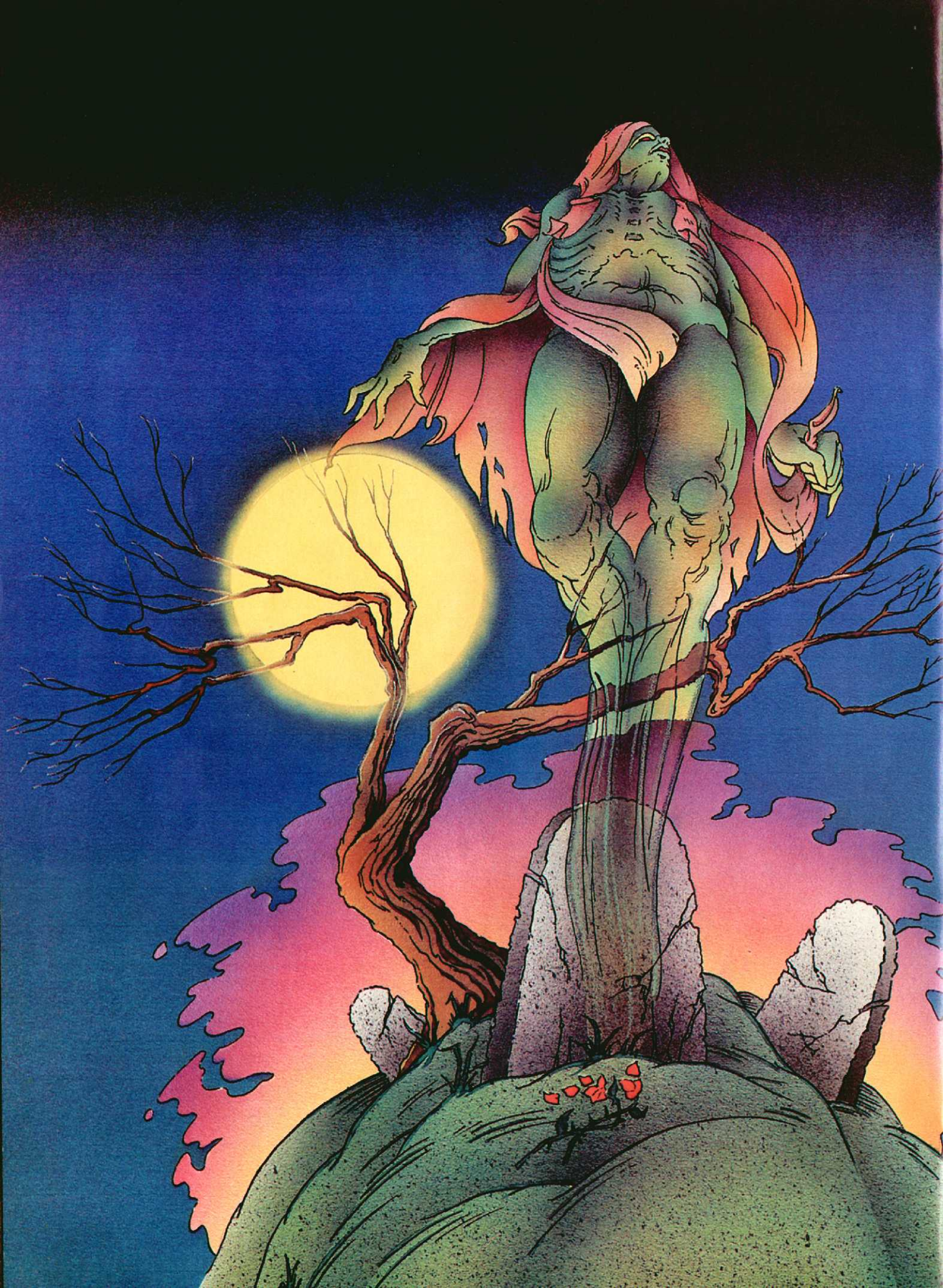
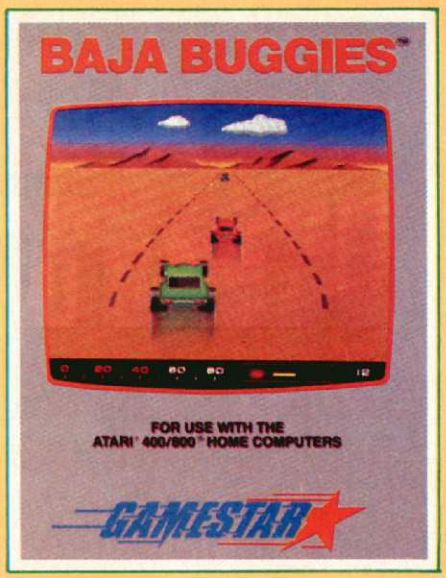




BAJA BUGGIES

BB offers players six levels — three Am and three Pro — as well as a sextet of courses and five difficulty levels. Until somebody does it better, this is the best piece of racing computer software in town.

(Bill Kunkel)

MONSTER MASH

Software Farm/Apple II/48K disk

It's the middle of the night, and monsters are rising from their graves to threaten Anytown, U.S.A. in Dave Eisler's unusual action contest. The arcader uses the numeric keys to open and shut the gates which section the graveyard-like playfield, and to operate the so-called "monster mashers" built into each headstone.

The creatures, at least at the start of the action, enter the graveyard from the upper right corner of the screen and wend their way toward the exit located in the lower left corner. The idea is to manipulate the gates (by pushing keys 1-4) so as to trap the creatures in front of the monster mashers (activated with keys 6-9). Novices can operate all gates with one key and all mashers with another. Once you've become reasonably practiced, you may want to attempt the advanced version, in which each gate and masher is controlled by a single key.

Four types of creatures haunt the playfield. Claws are the basic, heavy-duty monster in the game, and they are worth more if they are destroyed as close to the entrance as possible. Smokeys are just the opposite; you'll score more if you catch them near the exit. Eggs can be ignored, since their escape doesn't saddle the player with a penalty, but an egg turns into a snake if it is broken. The snakes are worth three times as much as Smokey, but each reptile counts as two escaping creatures if it gets through.

Also moving through the graveyard is a succession of visitors. Killing one by accident immediately ends the game. Letting 10 monsters escape unharmed has the same effect.

In the past, **EG** has treated arcade-style games which utilize a keyboard control system very harshly. This time, the control scheme is entirely appropriate to the distinctive play mechanic. Plainly, joystick control would only have been satisfactory in the basic game. Dave Eisler has done a fine job of developing a contest that isn't just a rehash of someone else's creativity. **Monster Mash** will not be the only great game in most gamers' software libraries, but it does offer an intriguing and satisfying brand of action you're not likely to find on many other disks.

(Steve Davidson)

MINER 2049ER

Micro Fun/Apple II/48K disk

One of the few things surer than death and taxes is that you'll be reading a lot about this multi-screen climbing contest in coming months. **Miner 2049er**, the inspired creation of Bill Houge, will be produced for nine different computer and videogame systems, so the entire home arcading nation may well be battling through this one before too long.

The Apple II edition, nicely programmed by Mike Livesay, has 10 scenarios which incorporate just about every climbing game wrinkle you can imagine — plus a few way-out surprises. The first scenario has ladders, the second adds a system of slides, the third introduces an elevator and so forth up to the cannon, which makes its debut at the tenth level.

The on-screen sourdough, who goes by the moniker of Bounty Bob, is moved along the various platforms using the joystick. A flick of the stick in the appropriate direction will send him up or down a ladder. Bounty Bob leaps straight into the air when you press the action button, but combining the stick and button permits him to leap over chasms and deadly mutants with ease.

No previous Apple II game can match the fluidity of *Miner's* control scheme. Lining up the character in the correct position to use a ladder sometimes causes problems in other games,

but not in this one. Some players will find it necessary to rein in their natural enthusiasm, lest they send Bounty Bob over the edge with a bit of over-zealous joysticking.

Unlike most other climbing games, the idea of *Miner 2049er* is not simply to get to the top of the screen in one piece. Bounty Bob, as a good prospector, must cover every inch of the playfield in order to move on to the next. Mutants with a deadly touch provide the main obstacle in the early going. They can be defeated, however, if Bounty Bob first picks up one of the tempting apples scattered around the screen. This causes the mutant to get a silly smile on its face and turn blue. Until the beast turns red once more, Bob can steamroll it for points.

One of several attractive frills is a five-position high score listing. It even carries over from play session to play session. Another good idea is that the player custom-aligns his joystick to a program when the disk is first booted. It only takes a couple of seconds to perform this operation, but it appears to enhance control significantly.

A hearty welcome to *Miner 2049er*, new king of the computer climbing games.

(Arnie Katz)

K-RAZY KRITTERS

CBS Software/Atari 400 & 800/cartridge

K-Byte's latest batch of cartridge programs for the Atari computer systems prove pretty conclusively that **K-razy Shoot-out** was no "k-razy one-shot". Particularly engrossing is **K-razy Kritters**, the most challenging variant on the old **Space Invaders** theme to come along in ages.

The playfield consists of vertical rows of caged demons. The gamer, armed with three laser bases, must destroy the cages, then dodge the invulnerable creatures he just released. Periodically, a base star flies by and a shot on target is good for a free base.

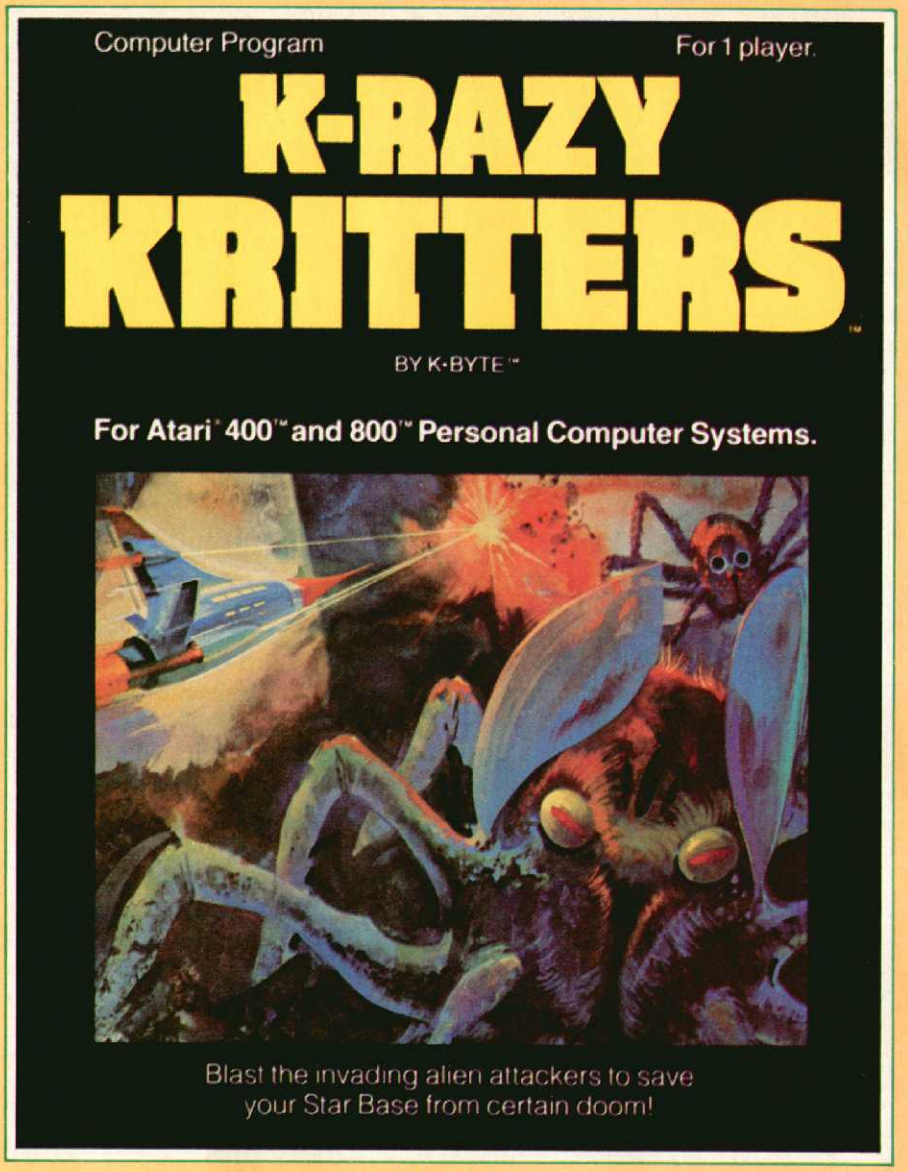
The trick here is to take out the middle rows first. The higher the demon cage, the more horizontal range the creature within has. Clearing up the middle leaves the side rows to block the escaped creature from moving too far east or west. Once the center is clear, start to work on the edges, where you blast and run to the far opposite end of the field and hide. By the time you reach the rows at the far right and left, even the most far-roving monsters should not be able to scarf you up.

K-RAZY KRITTERS

The action, as in all CBS software (K-Byte) games, is frenetic. Play mechanics are smooth as silk, and the sound and graphics are charming. All this, and the convenience of cartridge play as well!

In light of the expense of disk drives and the time consumed by tape loading, the American computer-game hobbyists are obviously drawn to cartridge games, and players can expect to see more and more during the coming year, as the computer business spreads from specialty computer shops to convenience stores and malls. Right now, there is a limited K capacity for these games due to the expense of chips, but the companies that are turning them out are continuing to prove that a great job can still be done in this format. Count *K-razy Kritters* among the best.

(Bill Kunkel)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K-RAZY KRITTERS

SOCCER

Thorne-EMI/Atari 400 & 800/16K

How about this one, sports fans? Here's a soccer simulation for the Atari computers in cartridge form that plays even better than Intellivision's version, allowing for two-player human teams *and* a solitaire version. Sound like a dream? Well, in its own subtle, understated way, EMI has been producing some of the best computer game

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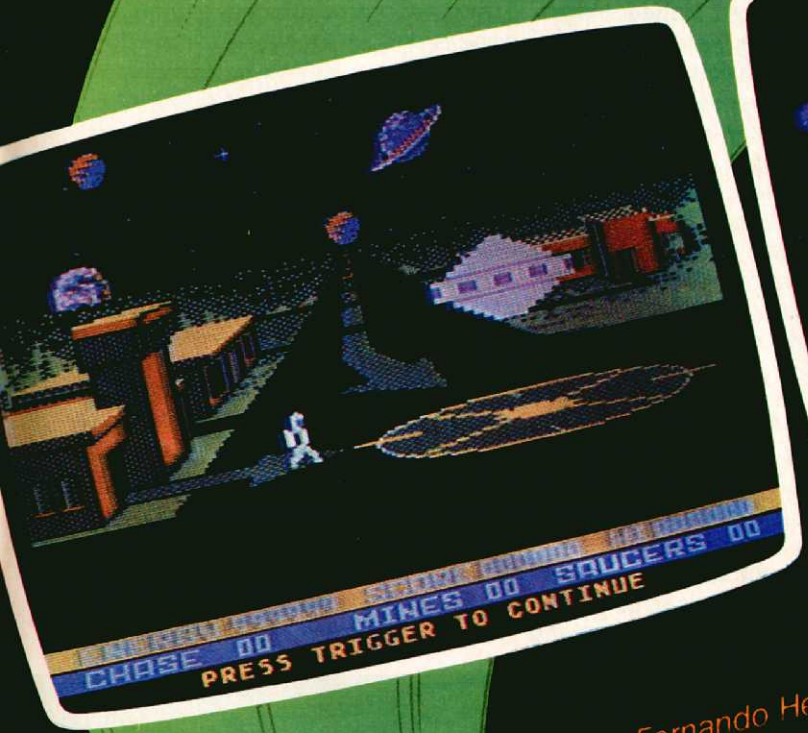

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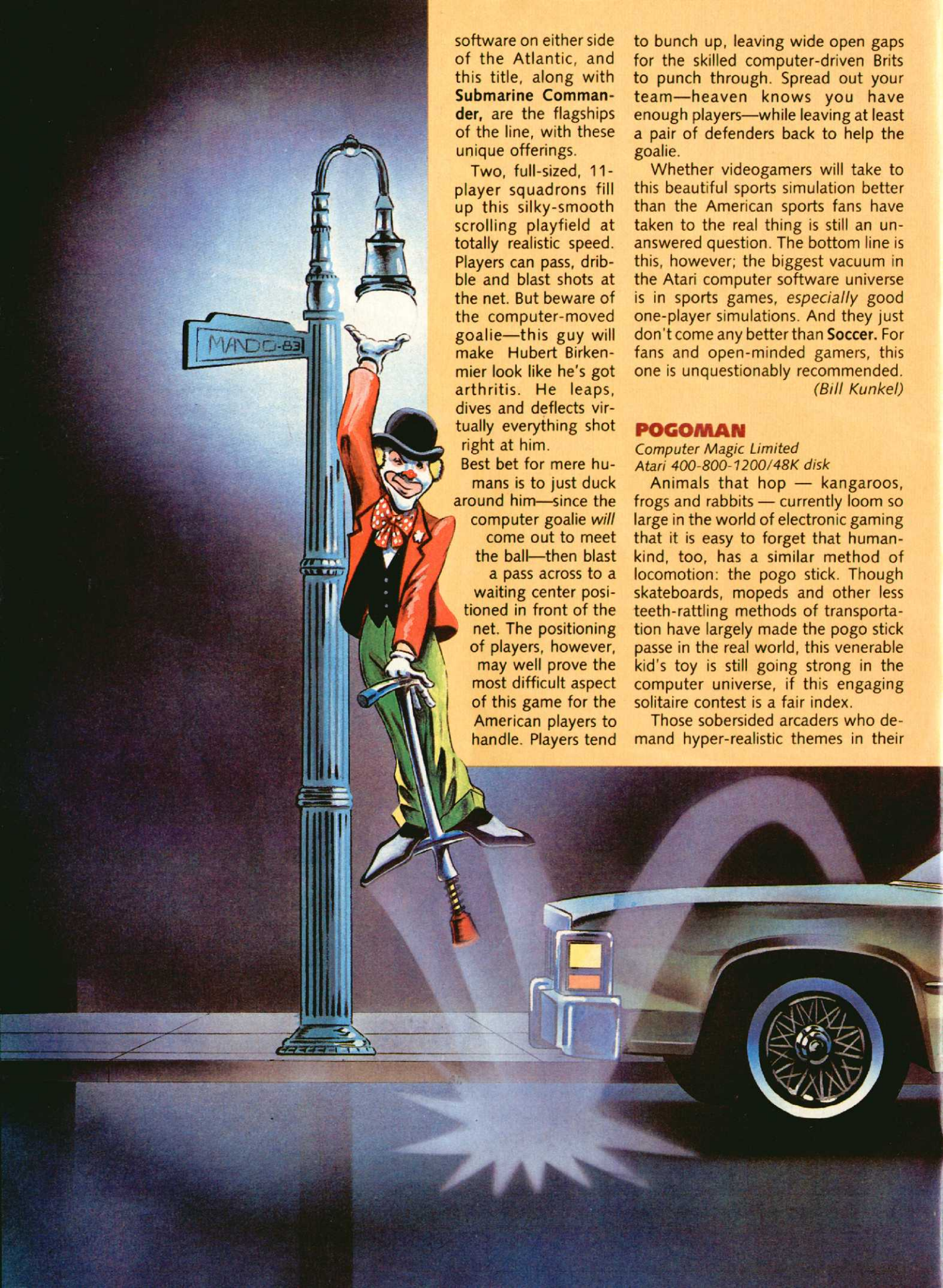

software on either side of the Atlantic, and this title, along with **Submarine Commander,** are the flagships of the line, with these unique offerings.

Two, full-sized, 11-player squadrons fill up this silky-smooth scrolling playfield at totally realistic speed. Players can pass, dribble and blast shots at the net. But beware of the computer-moved goalie—this guy will make Hubert Birkenmier look like he's got arthritis. He leaps, dives and deflects virtually everything shot right at him.

Best bet for mere humans is to just duck around him—since the computer goalie *will* come out to meet the ball—then blast a pass across to a waiting center positioned in front of the net. The positioning of players, however, may well prove the most difficult aspect of this game for the American players to handle. Players tend to bunch up, leaving wide open gaps for the skilled computer-driven Brits to punch through. Spread out your team—heaven knows you have enough players—while leaving at least a pair of defenders back to help the goalie.

Whether videogamers will take to this beautiful sports simulation better than the American sports fans have taken to the real thing is still an unanswered question. The bottom line is this, however; the biggest vacuum in the Atari computer software universe is in sports games, *especially* good one-player simulations. And they just don't come any better than **Soccer.** For fans and open-minded gamers, this one is unquestionably recommended.

(Bill Kunkel)

POGOMAN

Computer Magic Limited
Atari 400-800-1200/48K disk

Animals that hop — kangaroos, frogs and rabbits — currently loom so large in the world of electronic gaming that it is easy to forget that humankind, too, has a similar method of locomotion: the pogo stick. Though skateboards, mopeds and other less teeth-rattling methods of transportation have largely made the pogo stick passe in the real world, this venerable kid's toy is still going strong in the computer universe, if this engaging solitaire contest is a fair index.

Those sobersided arcaders who demand hyper-realistic themes in their

games will probably want to shy away from this one. Few games are based on a wackier idea than the one which inspired this release by the company which made its debut about a year ago with **Kayos**. You are responsible for directing the activities of a five-man team that is attempting to help the city save energy by shutting off streetlights during a summer heat wave. Why this worthy task must be accomplished by zany looking characters bouncing along on pogo sticks is never adequately explained, but when the program is this charming, who cares?

There are three types of jumps possible; regular, high and long. The ordinary jump is suitable for leaping over the animated obstacles which start showing up after the player has tallied 100,000 points or is heading through the city for a second round. The long jump enables Pogoman to clear some of the bulkier stationary obstacles, such as parked limousines, which might otherwise keep him from completing his watt-saving tour of the city. High jumps, on the other hand, are the only ones which give the lamp-douser enough altitude to switch off a streetlight.

Pogoman gives much greater rewards for intelligent selection of jumps than it does for sheer speed. Each crash knocks one of your five Pogomen out of the game and starts the scoring cycle for streetlights over again at 1,000 points. Each turned-off light is worth 1,000 points *more* than the previous one, as long as you don't collide with anything.

Once a Pogoman turns off a light, it stays that way until every light in the city is dark. The program then resets — after awarding the player a bonus of 30,000 points — and the action begins once more. A new menace, in the form of a pesky bird, makes its appearance during the third circuit of the metropolis or at the 200,000-point plateau, whichever comes first.

J.R. Man (programming), Andre Strichak (screen graphics) and Terry Feinberg (music) have all done themselves proud with *Pogoman*, though the visuals could have been a tad more refined in view of the graphic capabilities of the Atari computer systems. Still, this is an amusing program that poses a sterner test of arcading ability than might at first be obvious.

(Arnie Katz)

LOVERS OR STRANGERS

Alpine Software/Apple II/48K disk

Despite the faintly provocative title, this is not one of those sexy home electronic games that have raised hackles from coast to coast in the last six months. Rather, it is a compatibility test that indicates how well the two halves of a couple mesh in a wide range of areas, including communication, romance, values, sex, work, money, spirituality and play.

Of course, any such test should be viewed more as an interesting diversion than as a definitive analysis. Still, the computer's capability of collating a large amount of data very quickly makes it more indicative than the quizzes printed by *Readers Digest* and the like. Questions and scoring were formulated by Dr. Al Byers and Dr. Annette Long, Directors of Associates for Psychotherapy, Inc.

The test itself is reasonably quick and easy. There is a series of multiple choice questions which are answered simultaneously by both members of the couple using the Apple's numeric keys. For each question, a participant must choose an alternative for him- or herself and then guess how the spouse will answer the same query. The program holds more questions than are needed for any one questionnaire, so **Lovers or Strangers** will be at least slightly different each time you play.

Although there is absolutely nothing salacious about *Lovers or Strangers*, it will probably have most appeal for **EG's** older readers. The complete absence of graphics and other window dressing will undoubtedly make the game less attractive to many action-oriented arcaders. This is a solid piece of software which demonstrates that "adult games" don't necessarily have to mean products like the late, unlamented **Custer's Revenge**.

It may only seem to be a matter of semantics, but "adult", sexually sophisticated" and "erotic" *are* different from "smut" and "sleaze".

(Steve Davidson)

Shoot 'Em Up in Space: Does it Live Up to its Name?

By NEIL SHAPIRO

The letters *S.E.U.I.S.* (pronounced SOOS) stand for Shoot 'Em Up In Space. That's a pretty accurate description of at least one factor in this multi-faceted war game simulation of futuristic combat, but it is far from telling the whole story. Indeed, it's even a somewhat misleading title. Economic factors as well as strategic planning are as important to the outcome of this game as the shooting.

But the shooting *is* managed in a unique manner — combat takes place in real-time, almost arcade-like fashion. Still, this is certainly not **Space Invaders.**

The first thing likely to strike a newcomer to this space war game is the absolutely beautiful hi-resolution strategic map. While it's true that a map is not the territory, these come as close to catching the starry "feel" of intergalactic space as anything I have seen in either computer or board games. The stars almost seem to corsucate on the screen. Armchair space farers familar with telescopic views of such things as the Orion Nebula will find the finely detailed veils of nebulosity breathtaking as they glow on the video display.

While the rule book describes the playing field as being "hex-gridded", thankfully, the hexes themselves are not drawn onto the display. While it may take half a game to get used to determining where the hex boundaries are, it *is* well worth it, in this case, to give the artwork full play.

Six types of "terrain" are detailed on this strategic map. The bright stars (those surrounded by glowing nebulae) are commercial and economic centers with great starship-producing capability. The major stars are systems containing an advanced planet with starship facilities. Disk-shaped minor stars have planets less capable of starship production. The pin-point single stars have no planets; the clusters of small stars, asteroids and debris also contain no planets — and neither of these last two types can produce starships.

There are six varieties of starships that may be produced, and these may be arranged into light, medium and heavy squadrons. A light squadron is made up of the three fighter classes (light, escort and destroyer fighters). A medium squadron contains at least

S.E.I.U.S. features a colorful playfield

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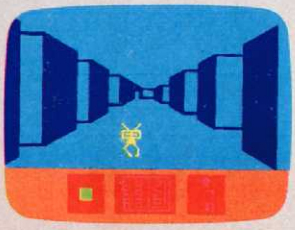

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one battle-cruiser (light or heavy) as well as fighters. A heavy squadron contains cruisers and, perhaps, a battleship.

Each of the squadron types has its own graphic symbol so the player can instantly see its complete makeup on the roster text display.

Each style of squadron moves at a different rate of simulated speed, which the computer monitors via SSI's new *Rapidfire* system of inputting moves from the keyboard. Time units automatically pass during the game, and an on-screen clock gives the player an indication of this feature.

Whenever it is a squadron's turn to move, it is highlighted on the strategic display. At the bottom of the map a small display appears which shows the squadron's graphic symbol and indicates how many ships of each type are in that squadron. Then the countdown clock begins to tick towards zero. Before time for that squadron to move runs out, you must hit one of the directional keys. The direction keys are laid out in a compass pattern (which is always shown on-screen) of the numbers 1 through 6 arranged in a counterclockwise circle around the number 0. Going East, for example, would be to press "2", going West would mean pressing "5" and standing still would be "0".

While each squadron moves one sector (hex) at a time, some squadrons are faster than others. Light squadrons can move every four time points, medium squads every six, and heavy squadrons can only move every 12 time points. This results in a realistic simulation of movement as a function of strength in arms, although I for one had a hard time accepting that large spaceships should, necessarily, move slower than small ones.

As your ships move through enemy star systems, you automatically capture them. They change in color to show who is the owning player. Bright, major and minor star systems — with their spaceship producing capabilities — are considered resource centers. As long as you own a system, you receive its resource points. A minor star system produces 10 production points every 40 time points; a major star system gives 12 every 21 time points; and a bright star system yields 11 production points in just 11 time points. During the game, the computer keeps track of the accumulations of these production points.

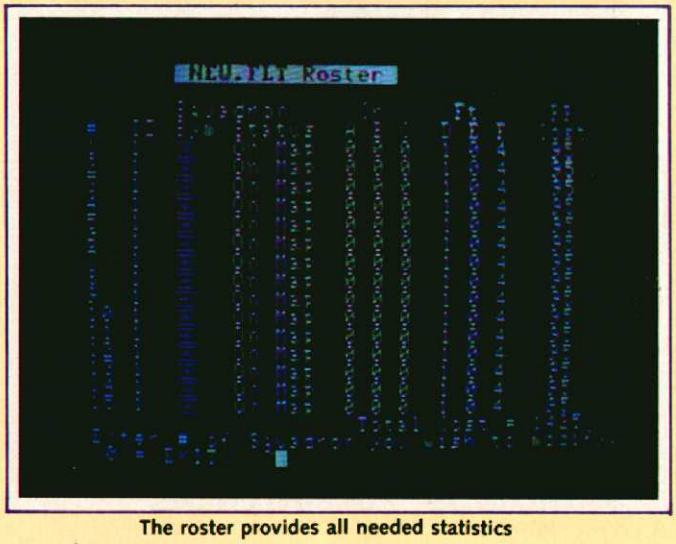
As you gain production points, the computer allocates squadrons of just-built reinforcements to your fleet. So you can expect a lot of jockeying about for control of these all-important resource centers on the strategic display. When two opposing squadrons try to move into the same sector of space, the game shifts to combat display mode.

Just before combat begins you divide each ship's energy points among its shields, weapons, and ranging systems. This, in effect, customizes each ship's offensive, defensive, and maneuverability qualities.

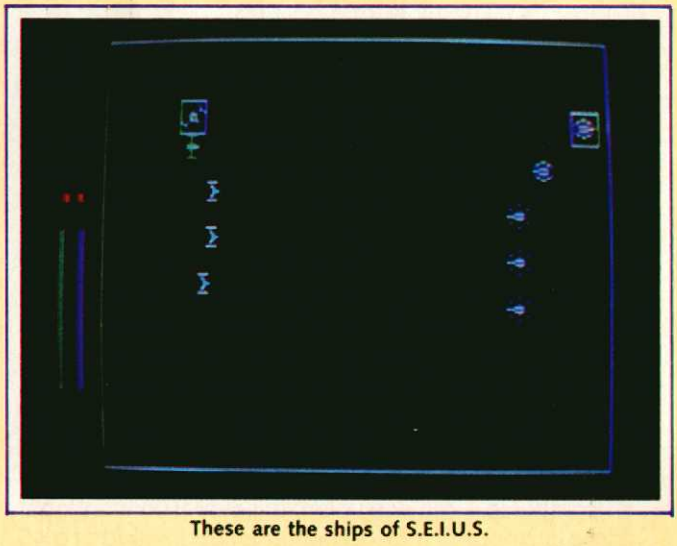
Now choose either a champion from your ships to meet the opposing side's champion — or go for a battle royal in which all the ships on both sides fight, with the flagship of each fleet under the players' direct control. (Playing solitaire, the computer can only go the champion-against-champion route.)

The direction of movement of your vessel on the combat display is controlled by the game paddle. If the other ship comes into range and is within a 90-degree cone-of-fire of your ship, the ship will automatically fire a homing missile. Or if you can manage to point *directly* at the fast-moving enemy, a press of the game-paddle button fires a burst with your devastating beam weapons. Bar graphs on the side of the combat display track and compare the damage levels of the two ships. An indicator beneath the bars tell you when your beam weapon is ready to fire.

Three scenarios and maps included with *S.E.U.I.S.* allows you to get acquainted with the game mechanics. The first scenario, "Battle in the Pleiades," uses a stunning strategic map to simulate an invasion. "The



The roster provides all needed statistics



These are the ships of S.E.I.U.S.

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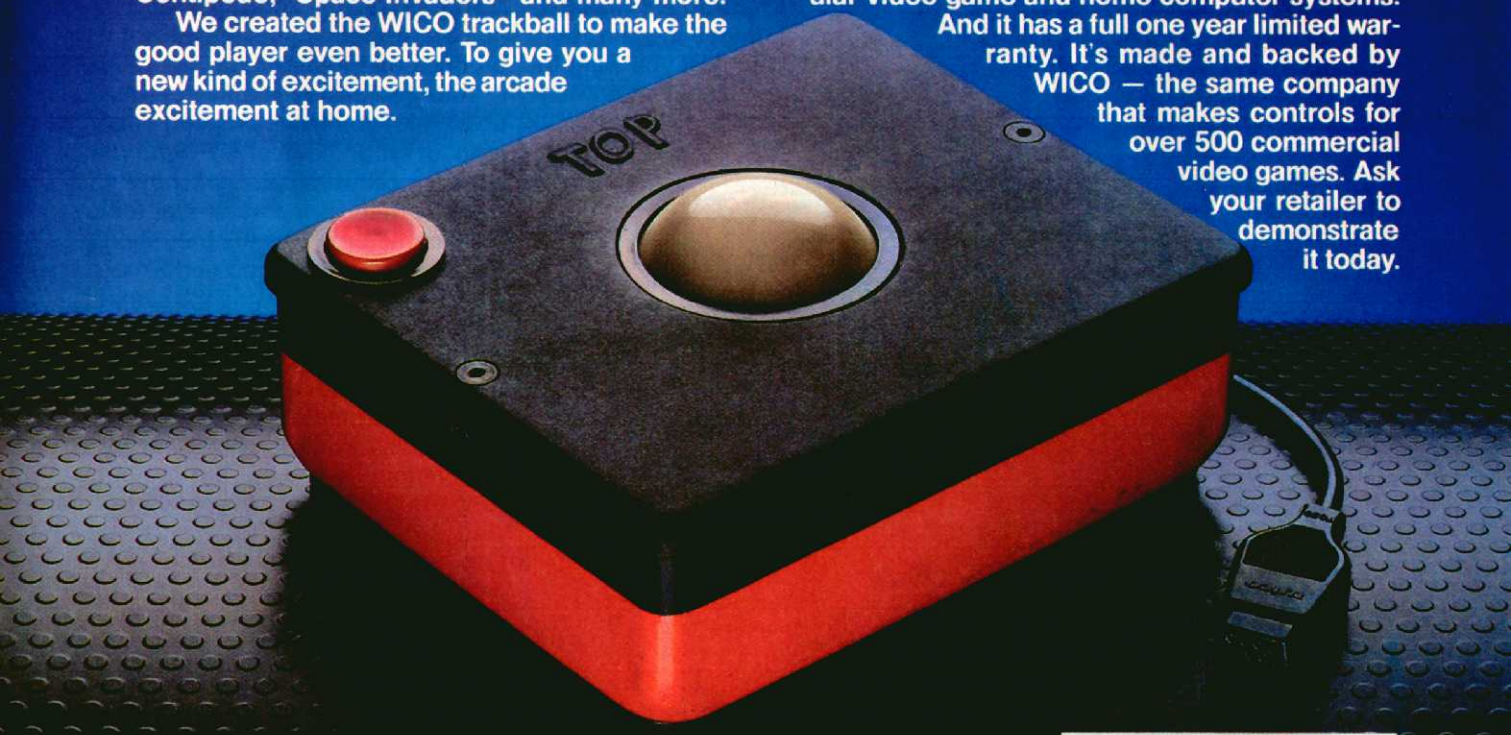

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Great Battle" is a free-for-all of ship combat and capturing resource centers. "The Final (Maybe) Battle" features a vast array of ship types.

Once you've enjoyed the canned scenarios, S.E.U.I.S. really gets interesting because it allows you to concoct your own game by modifying almost all of its many variables. This is one distinct advantage some computer war games have over board games; it is possible for the player to become an automated designer.

First thing you can do is to choose from six maps included on the disk. Then you design the fleet you want to use. You can either create an entirely new fleet with as many squadrons as you deem fit, or you can modify any of the fleets from the canned scenarios to fit your needs.

You can change the styles of the various ship types that make up the squadrons to fit your own ideas of what a fighting starship should be. And once you have altered the ships, you can even change the way in which the resource centers generate production points. You can change both the number of production points that a resource center produces and the number of time points in which it will produce that figure.

Then you deploy your fleet — made up of ships you have designed — on a map of your choice, to fight over resource centers that work how you want them to, via combats that follow the parameters you think they should. This is one of the most powerful means we have seen yet of using the computer in a war gaming situation.

There are only two drawbacks to the game. The combat phase can become somewhat repetitive if you only play against the computer. Avoid the onset of boredom by moving the computer to one of three playing levels so it always has a skill advantage. The option of actually shooting your opponent's pieces in war gaming goes way back to H.G. Wells, whom in his *Little Wars* rulebook, used cork-firing, toy cannons to score against the enemy, tin soldiers. But, if the coordination of arcade shooting doesn't appeal to you, you'd be better off passing this one by.

The pseudo-historical background explanation contained in the rules, while very well-written, failed as a background intro to this game.

All in all, this new war game marks a milestone in the development of the war gaming art. The player is now working hand in hand (or at least computer to computer) with the game's designers.

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Home Videogames

Is the thought of assembling (and paying for) a well-stocked library of videogame cartridges keeping you from buying the home videogame system you've been pining for? With the price of videogame cartridges being what it is right now, many people just can't afford as much variety as they'd like in their game libraries.

Nonetheless, 1983 may well be remembered as the year that home videogaming met cable television. And judging by reactions in test markets, it's a match made in heaven.

At least three national cable-videogame networks will be in operation by this fall, available to just about anyone who wants one (and is serviced by a cable TV system). Although your cable system will probably carry only one game service, so you won't be able to choose which one you want, they all have the same basic structure.

As with a cable movie network, the subscriber pays a monthly fee and gets a special cable adapter that allows him or her to receive the service. All three systems offer at least 20 games a month, available to subscribers 24 hours a day, as often as they want to play. Games are alternated regularly, but each company promises to be responsive enough to subscriber demand that the most popular games will stay active on the service for as long as people want to play.

Playcable, a product of Mattel, Inc. and the General Instruments Corp., got a jump on the competition by opening for business in late 1982. As of this writing, it's still the only game channel in actual operation.

THE WIZARD

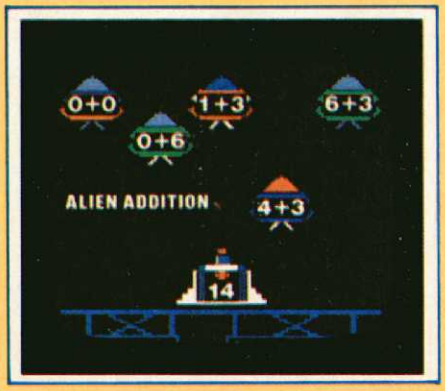
To subscribe, you must live in an area serviced by Playcable, and own either an Intellivision unit or a Super Sears Video Arcade. Playcable provides everything else you'll need, from the cable adapter to the games catalog, instructions, and keypad overlays.

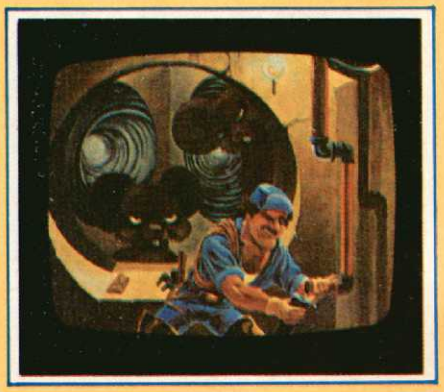
The current library is promising, featuring a total of 31 games, including **Star Strike, Lock 'N Chase,** and virtually all of Mattel's impressive Intellivision sports games. And, although nothing is official yet, there's a good chance that Playcable will eventually expand its library to include games from other producers as well. Fees for the service should run between $8 and $13 monthly, depending on the area.

Not to be left out of videogaming's hottest frontier, Atari is busy planning its own cable system in a joint venture with the folks at Time-Life. There's no word yet on the fee, or the name of the new system, but it will offer between 20 and 30 games via a cable adapter that plugs into the VCS 2600's cartridge slot. (You have to buy the VCS.)

The system will feature Atari's hottest games, and promises at least one new title a week to keep home arcaders on their toes. Subscribers will also have the opportunity to test out new Atari titles before they're released into general circulation. As an added bonus for adventure-oriented game lovers, the 64K computer on the other end of your cable hook-up allows for continuing games.

The Games Network, third company into the arena, has scored highly successful in several test markets. Although this network won't be featuring Atari or Mattel-produced software, it will offer the most diverse initial programming, drawing its titles from the best of microcomputer, VCS-compatible, *and* coin-op titles. According to Jim Summers, Director of





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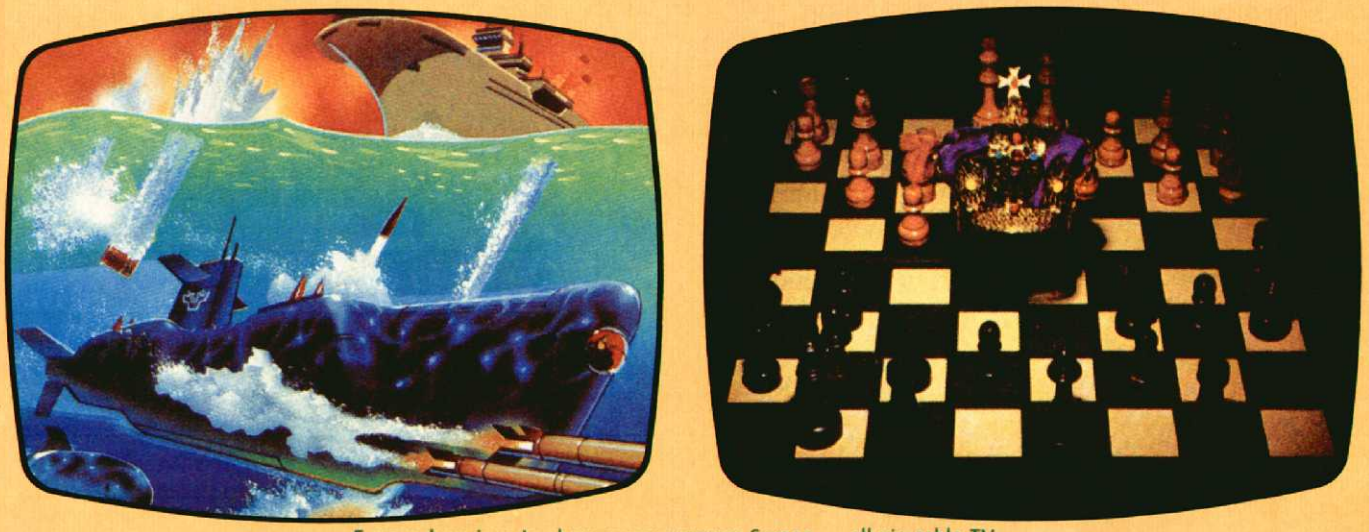
Meet Cable TV

By TRACIE FORMAN



From submarines to chess super-program Sargon — all via cable TV

Program Acquisitions, "Wherever there's a good game, we're gonna go get it!" So far he's living up to his word: The Games Network has already snapped up nearly all the top Apple-compatible games.

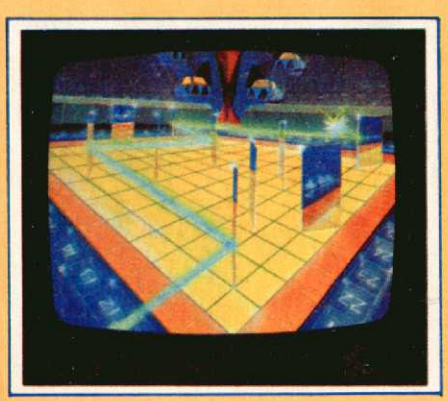
A major difference between this system and the other two is that you don't have to buy any hardware to subscribe. A one-time installation fee of $50 will provide you with all the equipment you need. This can be particularly attractive if the worst happens and your hardware breaks down, because the company will replace the unit quickly and at no charge to you. (This, understandably, does not apply to joysticks, which you have to buy yourself.) Fees will be approximately $14, and at least five games will be introduced, each month.

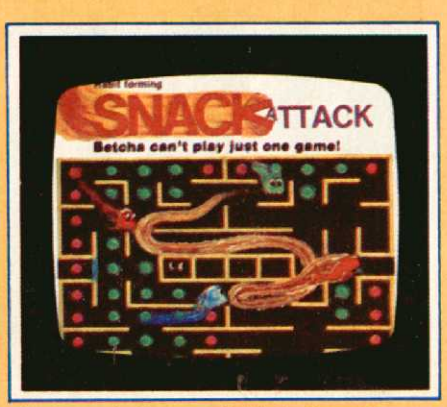
Coleco has yet to jump on the cable videogame bandwagon, but that doesn't mean it's been letting the other major companies capture all the prizes. They'll soon be unveiling a service called In-Room Video, which will provide ColecoVision units to hotel rooms throughout the country.

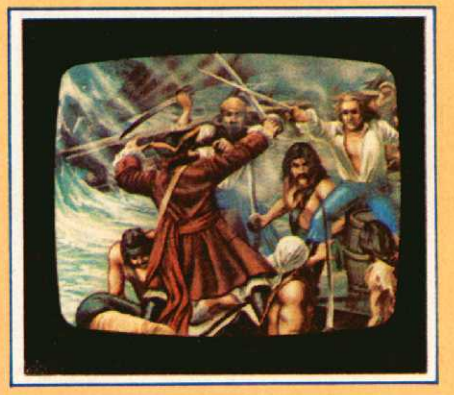
The way it will work is that guests at several major hotel chains will be able to reserve a room with a ColecoVision game unit for a minimal extra fee. When they check into their rooms, they'll be given between one and three cartridges, which they can use for the duration of their stay. Extra cartridges will be available on a rental basis.

This should prove ideal for families travelling with children as well as diehard videogamers. The idea has already been tested successfully at large hotels throughout the country, such as Howard Johnson's in New England and an unspecified hotel near Disneyland. It should be widely available soon, so ask your travel agent for details.

Not only will the new cable-gaming systems bring more people into this exciting hobby, but for those of us already involved this is an idea whose time has come. So next time you're tired of watching free TV reruns or cable movies, try switching on to something new — videogames via cable.







A trio of game selections available to the cable-gamer

Second Generation Centipede

By RON DUBREN

(Ed. Note: Ron Dubren is a double threat —a writer and a freelance videogame designer. He wrote The Video Master's Guide to Centipede (Bantam Books) and his new Atari VCS-compatible game, **Guardians of Treasure** *will be marketed by U.S. Games and Fisher-Price. A coin-op game co-designed with the Dave Nutting Associates group will be released shortly by Bally/Midway.)*

MILLIPEDE

Atari

Not another sequel! Yup. Atari has spawned another creepy-crawly game, **Millipede.** Emerging from the cocoon of **Centipede**, this sequel challenges the player to take on a gallery of old and new enemies. It's new! It's bigger! It's faster! Cut out the sequel hype, however, and what are we left with?

A good sequel shouldn't be merely a jazzed-up version of the original. To keep the regular player interested, the follow-up must offer novel play elements not found in the mother game. On the other hand, it must remain close enough to the original to bring back the players who made the original a hit in the first place — and set it all up with more challenging game play in order to reignite their interest.

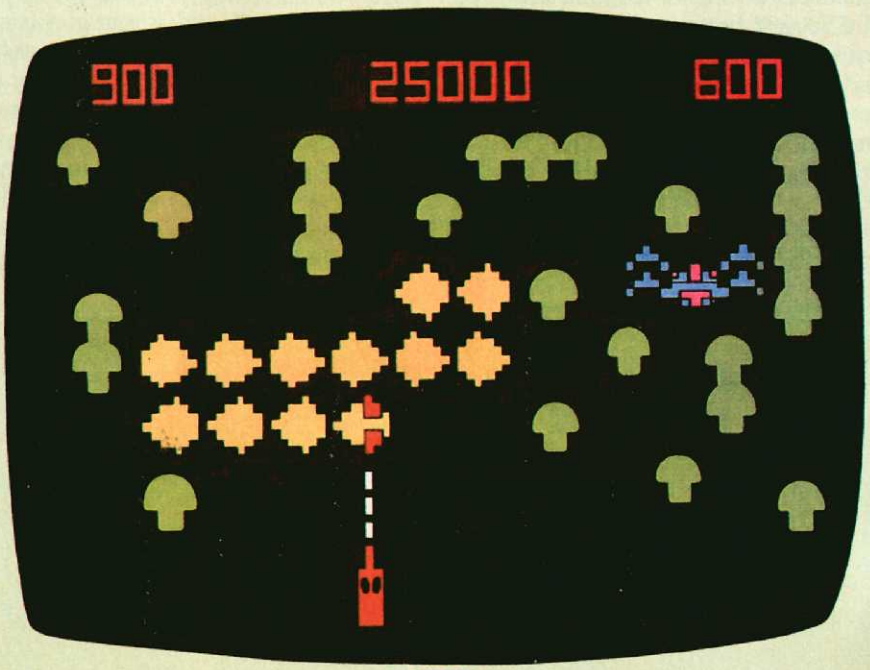
Atari also sought to weed out any flaws or weaknesses in the original program. The new versions thwart such classic tricks as the Blob and Side Feed Game strategies, that were utilized by devious *Centipede* players in the past.

In light of this, let's take a look at how *Millipede* meets these criteria.

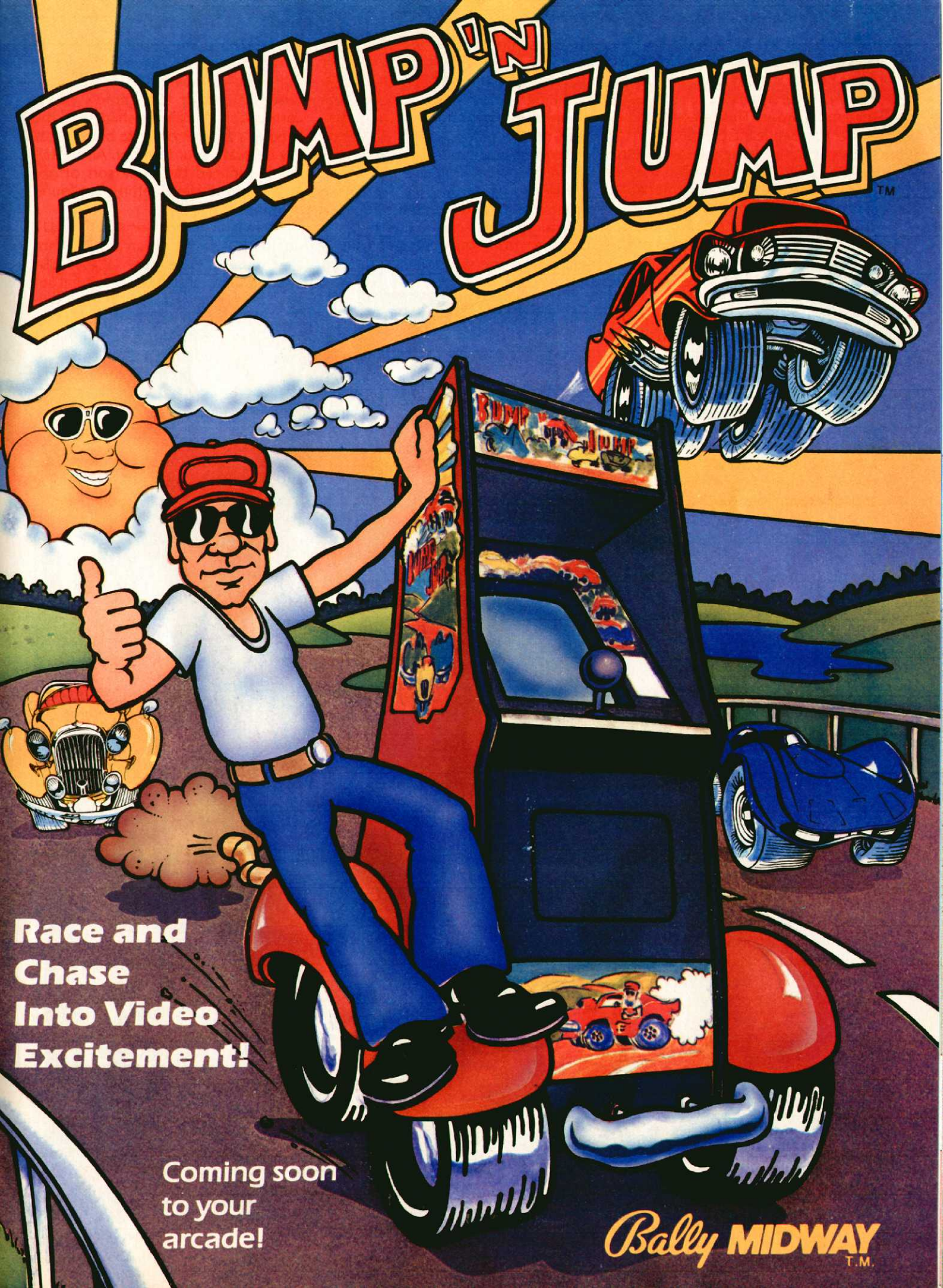
The mushroom playfield is no longer fixed but scrolls downscreen, one level at a time, with the completion of each attack wave. This advance makes it that much more difficult to keep your cannon's play-zone open for freedom of movement. But, alas, the advance of the mushroom field also occurs when you hit one of the new adversaries, the Beetle. A simple strategy appears obvious: don't be suckered into shooting the beetles. Forget the points and just keep those mushrooms at bay. Right?

Wrong. The wizards at Atari came up with a clever means of thwarting this tactic. If a beetle is not eliminated, each mushroom it passes over is transformed into a flower, much as the scorpion (here reincarnated as an earwig for some inexplicable reason) in the original poisoned the 'shrooms. The flowers — unlike the mushrooms, poisoned or otherwise — cannot be

MILLIPEDE



CENTIPEDE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shot away. If any mushrooms become floriated in the shooter's zone, it's panic time as the cannon's movements become severely limited for the rest of the assault wave. This can happen because the Beetle first appears in the shooter's zone. It enters at the side and travels down, then across the bottom level before rising up and floriating every mushroom in its path — unless you waste it first. This will, of course, trigger the downward scrolling of the flowers and 'shrooms one notch. To counter this advance-scroll function, the designers were kind enough to allow players a shot at making the mushroom field retreat. All you've got to do is hit the mosquitoes, which zoom downscreen diagonally at random intervals.

Another new feature is the bombing run, which is inserted every few waves after killing off an entire Millipede. Bombing runs may consist of bees, dragonflies and/or mosquitoes. Both the bees and dragonflies leave mushrooms in their wake and descend in dangerous clusters at high speeds. The bombing run serves to replenish the mushroom field at a much faster-than-normal rate.

Several other nice touches in this excellent follow up should be noted. The inchworm, when shot, causes all the adversaries to move in slow motion for several seconds, giving the gamer a breather from the fast and furious game play, *and* some time to rack up points. This is the counterbalance, in terms of fairness, to the overwhelming number of bombing runs. Speaking of fairness, one of the game's nicest cosmetic changes is the shading of the shooter's zone in order to better visually deliniate your territory. Also, Atari has introduced the same sort of optional difficulty level settings, as found in **Tempest.**

There's lots more, such as the DDT bombs, but this is only an article — not an entire book devoted to the subject. So you'll just have to figure out the more elusive elements yourself.

Now, when are they coming out with *Megapede?*—well, I made the editors of **EG** no promises on *that* one.

EG

CENTIPEDE (COIN-OP)

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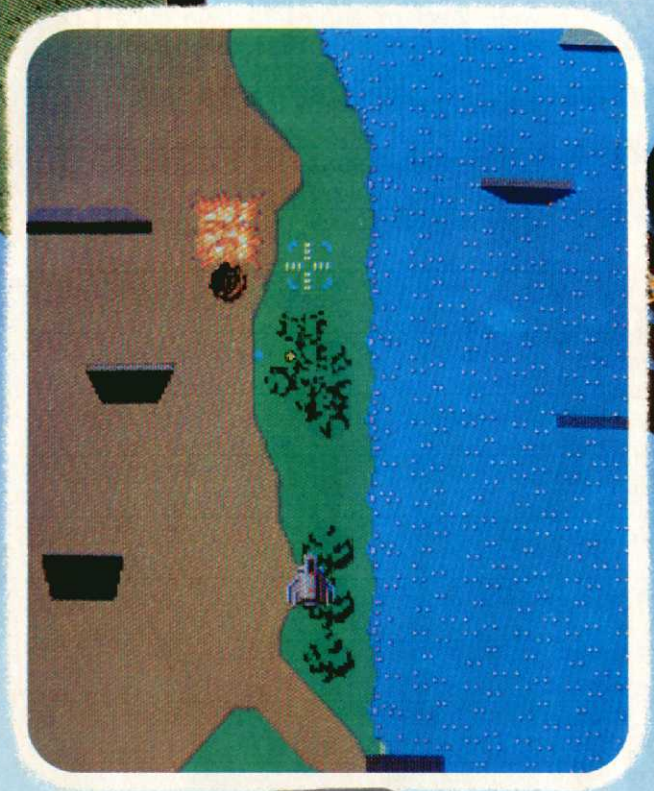

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COLLECTING COIN-OPS

How to Get Your Favorite from Game Room to Living Room

By ROGER C. SHARPE

America is a society of scavengers, ever on the lookout to reclaim some vestige of past days gone by. Whether it's a work of art, baseball cards, or even a favorite old shirt that has seen better days, we all tend to collect, or at least accumulate our individual hoards of thingies and doodads.

Some do this for personal pleasure, others because they believe it's a worthwhile investment. Sometimes there's a sense of nostalgia or fascination attached to the objects we keep.

One collectible likely to appeal to most **EG** readers is so obvious you may have overlooked it — arcade games. Even if you have a home videogame system, and buy all the latest cartridges as they're released, or own a full array of electronic hand-helds, it's still not the same as the pay-for-play machine. Atari's **Pac-Man** is okay, but it's tough to *really* compare it to the Bally/Midway model which inspired all the fuss. And how many other coin-op amusements are there that have not yet been duplicated, or can't be?

Every coin-op machine ever made is a limited edition, with a finite number produced no matter how successful the model. So there may be an additional incentive to bring one (or more) of them into your home. What may be a surprise to some is how easy it is to own a real piece of the arcade.

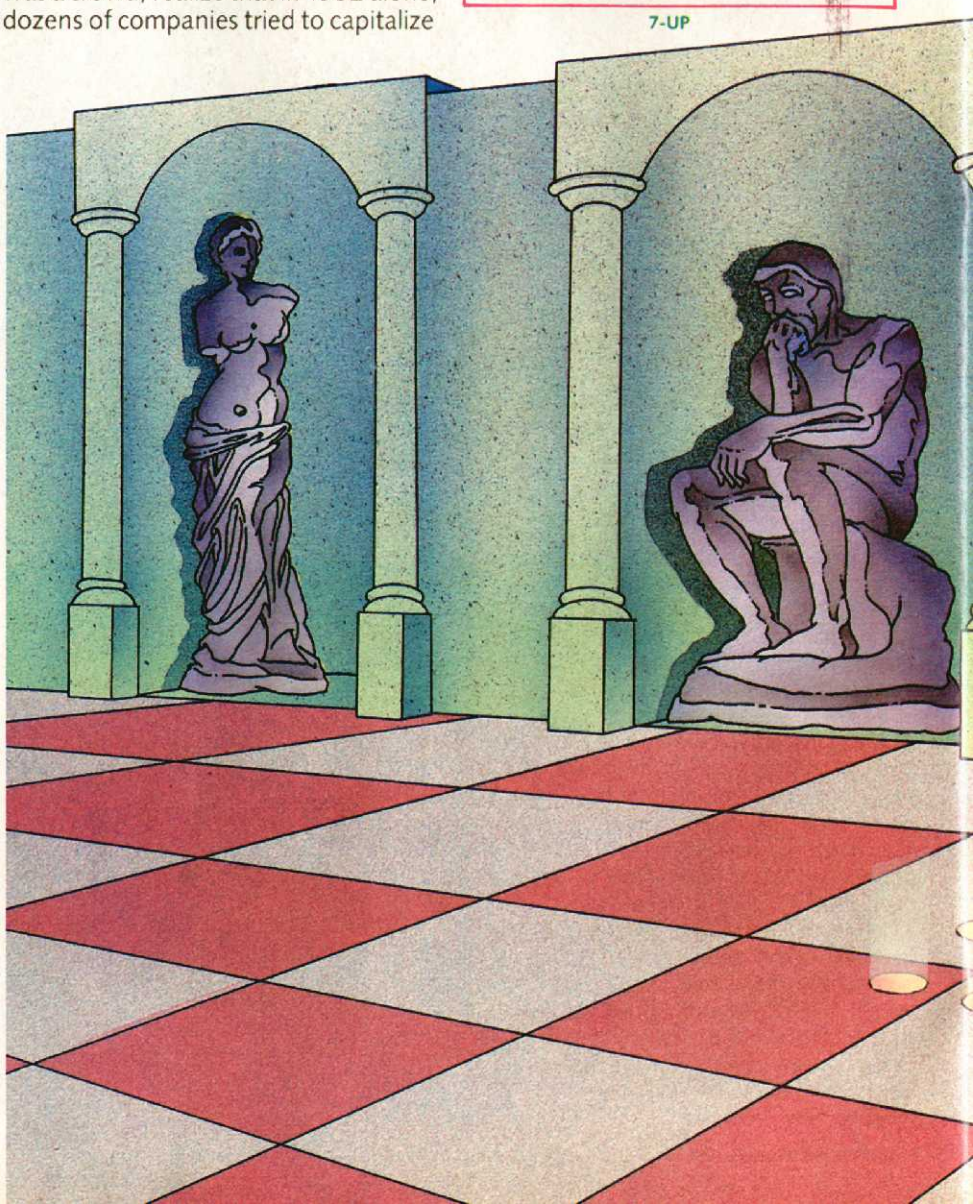
In general, the widely held assumption has always remained that the machines are somehow, off limits, or at least too expensive to ever consider for purchase. In fact, there seems to be a notion that coin-op games are part of a separate world, and that when a particular model has outlived its usefulness and disappeared from the scene, it is resurrected elsewhere for a new group of players.

Well, I've got to tell you that this just isn't the case. Admittedly, some games are easier to find than others, but where there's a will, there's probably a way.

Start with the 1930's, when the industry first geared up and attained a wide level of popularity. The initial efforts of Gottlieb in 1931, called **Baffle Ball**, or **Ballyhoo**, a '32 item from Bally are two games which, if found, have a presence that sets them apart from the crowd. And if you don't think there was a *crowd*, realize that in 1932 alone, dozens of companies tried to capitalize on the pin game boom, and produced more than 100 different coin-op models.

Other notable achievements during this growth period included the legendary Harry Williams' **Contact,** which brought the first kick-out hole as well

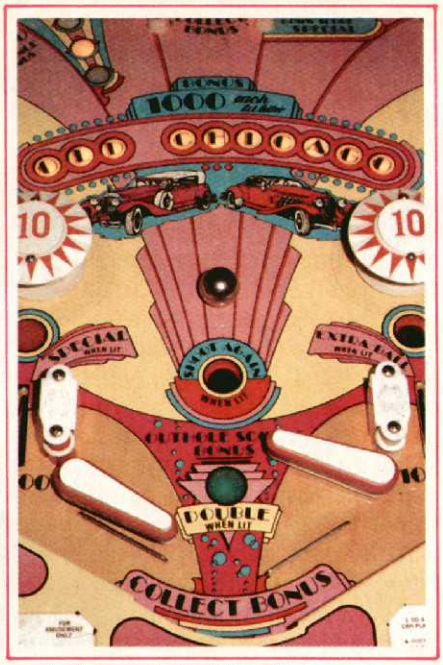
7-UP



as real mechanical action into play in 1933. Another was Bally's **Rocket** (1934). This unit struck out in another direction and became the first pay-out pin game.

If you're willing to dig a little into the history of the coin-op industry, there are any number of models which might someday show a greatly increased value. The determining factors are accessibility and whether this category of Americana, in general, will ever interest the caliber of serious collectors who bring instant credibility to a field of collectibles.

Until this happens, if ever, you might want to set your sights on such models as the World War II "conversions" made when the industry shut down to devote its manpower and factory space to the production of bomb sights and other similar parts to help the war effort. The few machines released during these years were called conversions because old models were revived as new machines by salvaging parts, refurbishing components above and below the playfield and changing the artwork.



A close-up look at the playing surface of an antique pinball machine

As for those games which immediately hit the streets after the war, Bally's **Victory Derby,** a one-ball pay-out console, was first, while Gottlieb came through with **Stage Door Canteen** in 1945, and Chicago Coin hit the streets with **Kilroy.**

Before going any further, there's an important comment that must be made about the models already mentioned, as well as some of the other older units; they fall far short of the razzle-dazzle electronics found on today's machines. This doesn't mean they aren't worth the effort or don't pack their own special appeal, only that they are a different breed of equipment that's not for everyone.

Falling into this category is

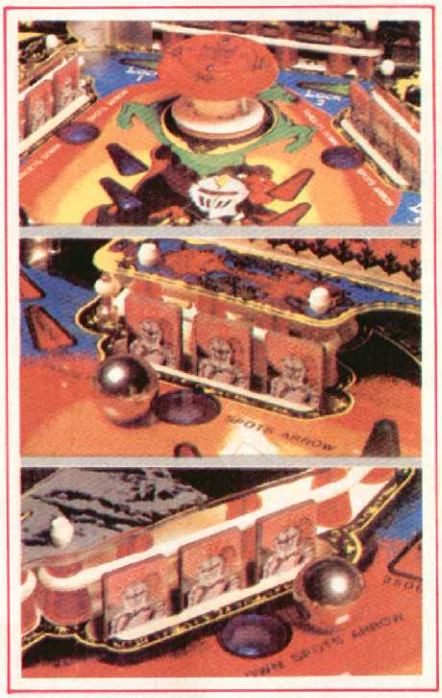
COLLECTING COIN-OPS

Gottlieb's **Humpty Dumpty** (1947), which brought flippers to pin games and forever changed the face of coin-ops. Then there are the "wood rails" of the 1950's; named for their cabinetry, they have become prized over time because so few can be found in good working order. It's the later games, however, where the search is a bit easier and the choice expands from just pinball to also include videogames.

How about the first commercially successful video machine, **Pong,** released in 1972 from Nolan Bushnell's newly formed company, Atari? Even in 10 short years, this machine has earned a solid place in coin-op history that should add to its value over time.

Looking at the major videogame companies during this time, you might have a desire to grab onto an Atari **Sprint 2** (1976), which was one of the more successful driving games. **Starship 1** in 1977 was Atari's first game with a space theme, while **Football** introduced tracball play to the arcades.

Rival companies, including Midway, boasted special offerings such as the long-popular **Sea Wolf,** a periscope video machine, and even the original **Space Invaders** from 1978. Exidy's **Death Chase** (1976) was a driving game that caught a whole lot of attention because the purpose of the action was to hit people on the screen and maneuver around the resulting tombstones. You wouldn't even go wrong with Cinematronics' **Space Wars** (1978), which premiered vector graphics in videogames.



A bumper and drop targets from Williams' Black Knight

This is by no means a complete list of the good titles from that period. In fact, you probably have your own personal favorites which long ago disappeared from view and are waiting to be discovered in the back warehouse of a local distributor or game retailer.

Since demand for old coin-ops at this time is still fairly low, prices shouldn't be too bad given the relative age of the equipment. Add to this that many people aren't actively seeking these "prehistoric" relics and prices should be in the affordable $200 to $600 range, depending, once again, on the knowledge of the seller and the condition of the game.

Pinball has, at least so far, cornered the real interest and attention. Flipper games enjoyed a rebirth of sorts in the mid-1970's that made them a desirable and even chic commodity for home purchase. Their popularity also gave rise to the coin-op game restorer and retailer, a business which grew in step with the times.

One of the most eagerly sought after and highly-prized possessions for coin-op collectors is **Fireball,** which almost became synonymous with the idea of pinball machines. Besides dis-

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tinctive and colorful graphics, this 1972 release features multi-ball play, zipper flippers (which close up when the ball hits particular targets) and a spinning disk at mid-field. Whether it is indeed the consummate pinball machine of all time, many feel, is a debatable subject.

In 1975, Bally unveiled **Wizard** with the likeness of Ann-Margaret and Roger Daltry on the backglass as a summer tie-in with the movie "Tommy". The following year, Bally brought out **Capt. Fantastic,** which prominently displays Elton John at his pinball playing best. Both featured technological innovations taking place which should have earned a greater amount of recognition and credit for development of the art and science/pinball industry.

Another good example of an innovative, yet overlooked, game is **Dyn O' Mite,** produced by Allied Leisure in late '75. It was the first pinball machine that integrated electromechanical components with solid-state electronics—a true harbinger of what was to come. Soon after, Mirco Games unveiled the short-lived **Spirit of '76,** a totally electronic flipper game only slightly ahead of its time. There was also Bally's now classic **Eight Ball** (1977) which was the company's most successful modern era pinball machine and featured memory and recall programming for the playfield targets and values. The same year found Gottlieb changing over to solid-state electronics with **Cleopatra**. Two short years later, Williams brought speech to the games via **Gorgar.** Not to be forgotten was Atari's venture into pinball. The California company released **The Atarians** in 1976 and changed the shape of flipper games. And then there was Williams' **Black Knight** (1980), which took pinball into dual-level, multi-ball play, further embellished by magnets under the field as well as speech and a range of other special light and sound effects.

My story, so far, may have piqued your interest and curiosity, but you may be wondering how and where to begin the quest.

Just check the Yellow Pages listings under "Amusement Devices" for local distributors and retailers in your area where you can begin your hunt. For the most part, these will be the same people who supply the game rooms around town with their equipment.

Other avenues to explore include the classified advertising section of your newspaper, flea markets and garage sales and — possibly the most direct route — your favorite arcade. Talk to the owner and see if he's interested in getting rid of one of his games that you have your eye on.

As for the condition of the games, check them out thoroughly to make sure that all parts are in good working order. Look inside the cabinet to see if all the wiring and circuit boards seem to be well maintained. Ask for the game's instructional booklet (which all have) so that you can read up on the game and its various features. Find out if there is any service you can expect when you get the game home and something happens to it.

By and large, pinball machines of recent vintage should be in the $300 to $700 range, depending upon condition. Videogame machines might run a few hundred dollars more if the game is still a viable earner on location. The important starting point is to understand that new machines cost the operator from about $2,000 on up to $3,000 and more — so backtrack from there when framing a price and deal you can live with.

These are just some of the basics involved in getting the real McCoy for personal use.

That's when the fun begins, believe me, since I have eight pinball machines of fairly current variety and five more antique games from the '30's. They're fun to have, a true kick for friends who come over, and somehow make the prospect of leaving the arcade that much easier because of the realization that you're going home to your own games. You can share in that feeling as well. Just take it a step at a time.

MR. & MRS. PAC-MAN

In Black Knight, the left/right inside alleys activate timers that give gamers three seconds to gain points

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Danger Signs for Arcade Fanatics

VIDEO

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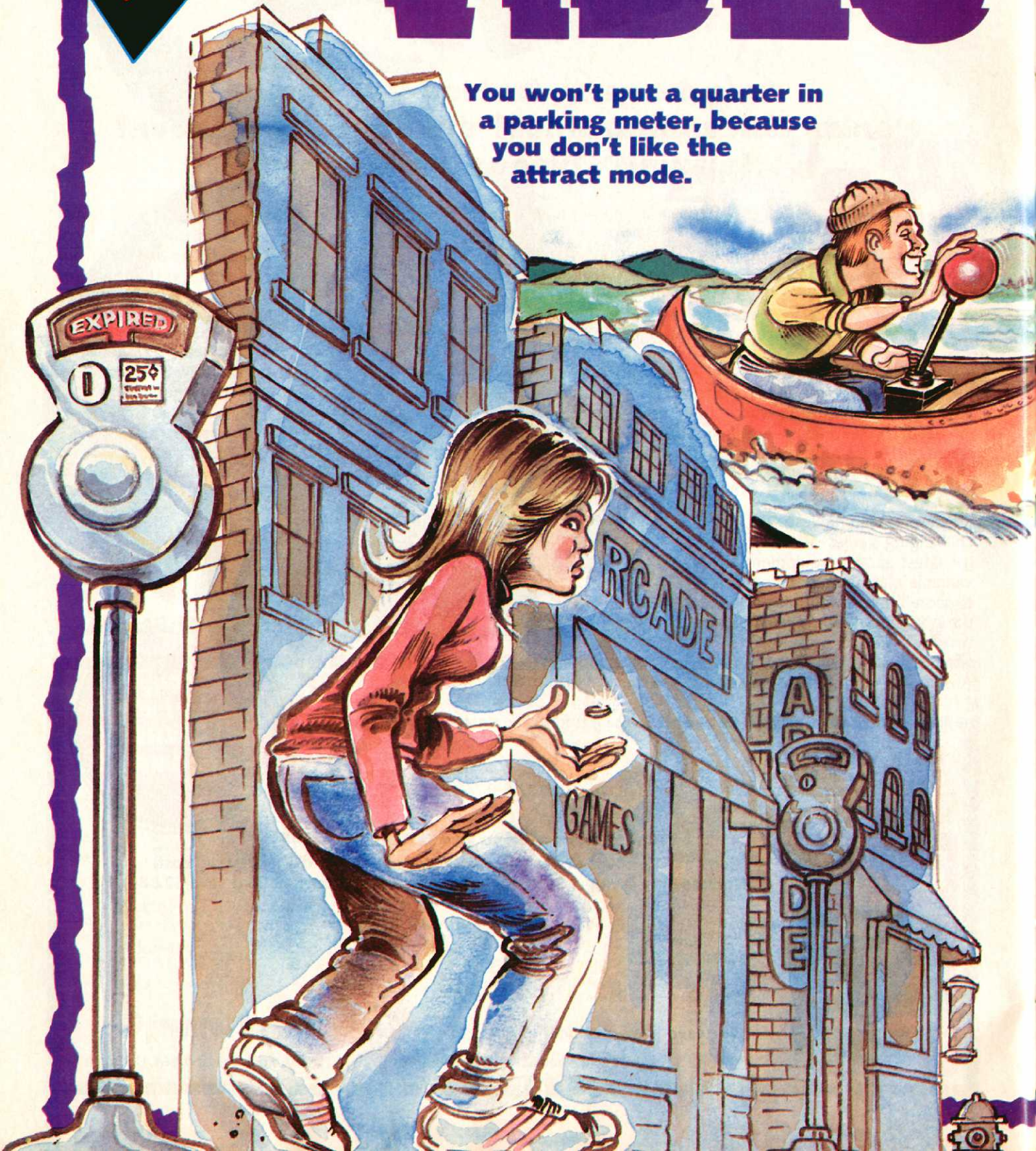
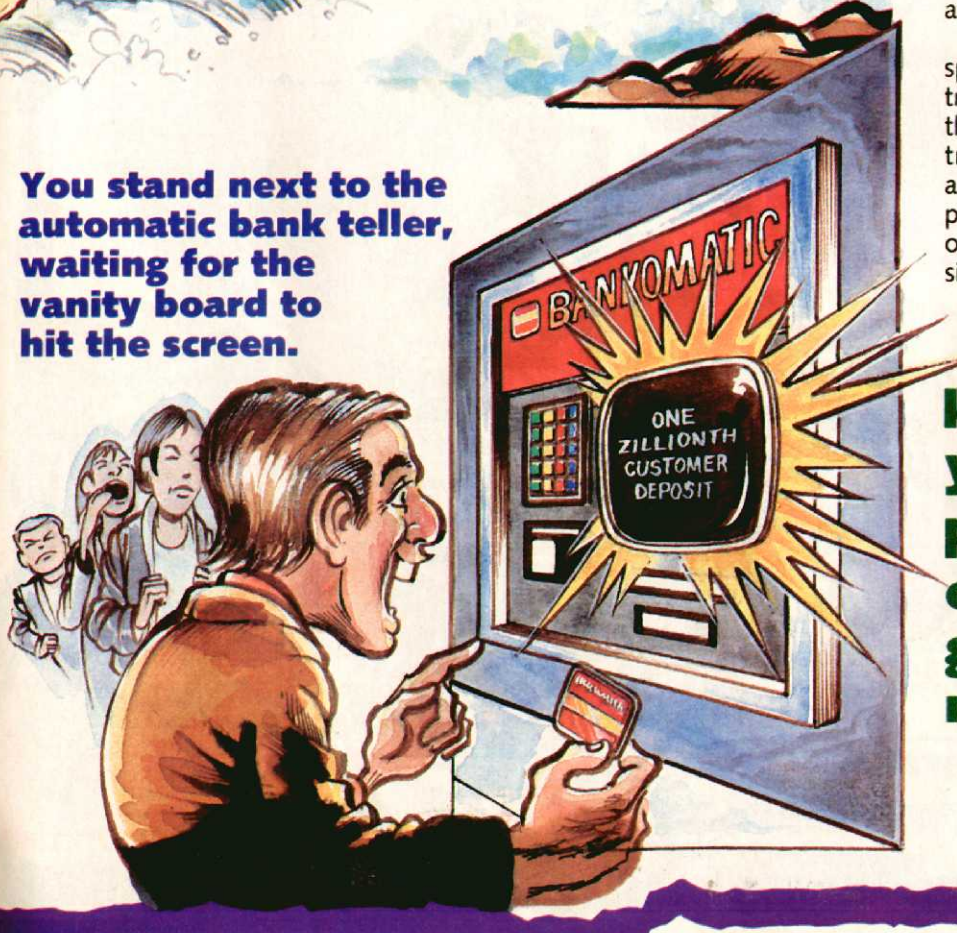


MANIA

You tell your fellow canoe-ists you'd rather use a joystick than a paddle.

You stand next to the automatic bank teller, waiting for the vanity board to hit the screen.



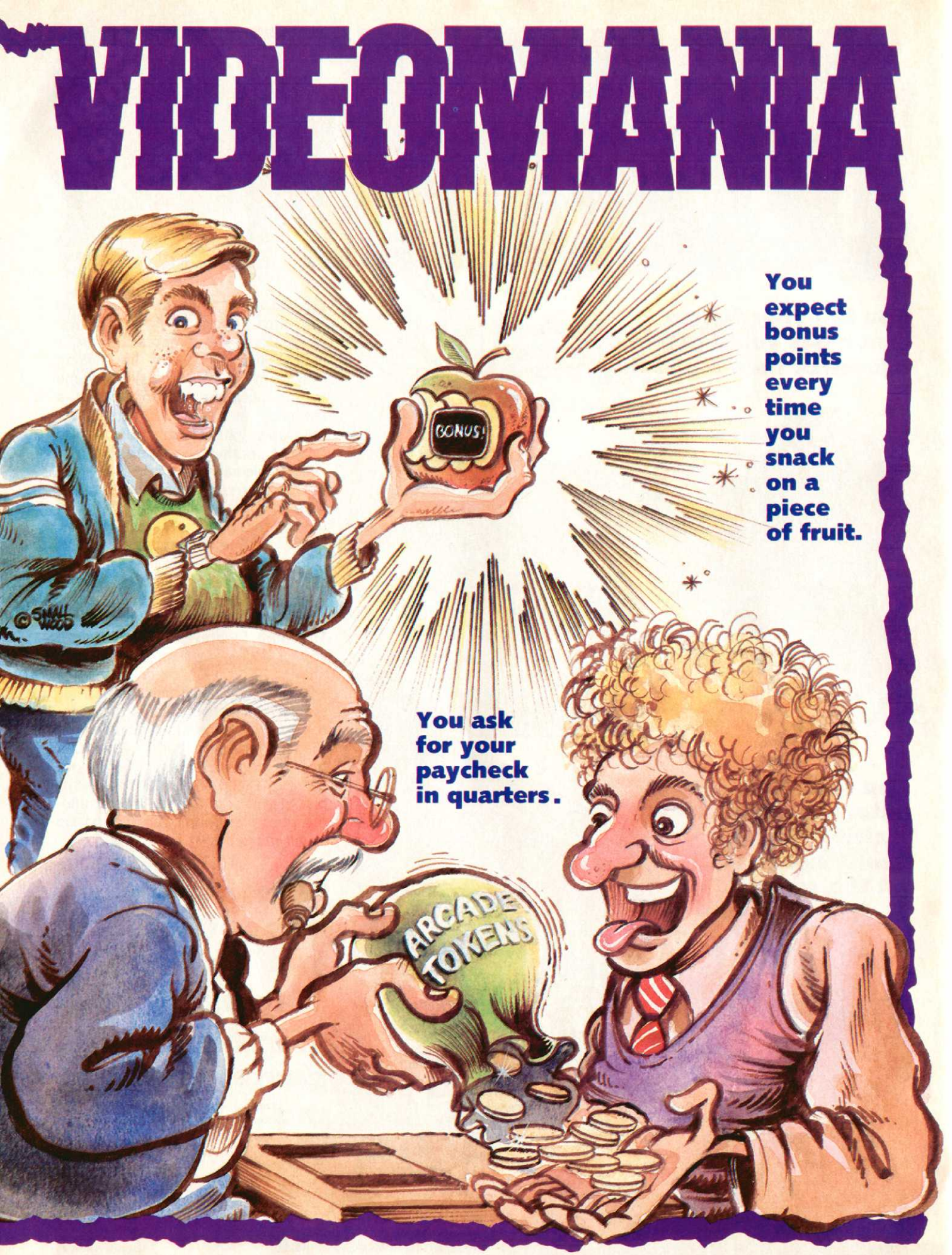
Even videogames can get to be too much of a good thing at times. After all, this is supposed to be a hobby, not a way of life. Going overboard and devoting all your time to the playscreen definitely has a tendency to make the games less enjoyable, rather than more so. To relate it another way, even the most pleasurable pastime is more fun when it is one of a number of activities rather than turning into an all-consuming passion that blots out everything else.

The real question, as astute readers have no doubt guessed already, is how to tell if you are in jeapordy of turning into a videogame monomaniac. It isn't always easy to spot the danger signals. The time to prevent this is before you've become a video zombie, not after.

Accordingly, **Electronic Games** has spared no expense to comb the country, making detailed observations in the field relating to this situation. Our trained observers have fanned out across the land and unearthed examples of what can happen when someone goes at electronic gaming a bit too single-mindedly.

So, now you know that you've been playing electronic games too much when. . .

VIDEOMANIA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COIN-OP CLASSROOM

By BILL HEINEMAN

Stalking the Tomb of Tutankham

As you enter the hall of the guild of free adventures, you will see a sign on the wall with the guild's motto:

"What is not nailed down
is mine,
whatever I can pry loose
is not nailed down."

You are greeted by a guard who asks, "Are you a member?" You reply, "No, but I would like to join." The guard then escorts you to the membership desk, where a tall man of possibly elfish descent is seated. The tall man says "So you want to join the guild do you? We can arrange that, but first you must pass this simple test. Sign on the dotted line."

You sign the paper without reading it and soon regret the rash act because it gives the guild the right to send you to those pearly gates if you fail your test. The "simple" test sounds easy; go to Egypt and find the tomb of Tutankham, discover the Golden Death Mask and bring it to the guild as proof of your bravery, cunning and lack of common sense.

You are armed with a laser (laser!?!) gun that can kill anything. The laser also has one weird property (probably rigged by the guild so you won't come back) — it can shoot East and West but won't fire North and South. The elfish man says, "You must now go on your mission, and if you don't return soon, well. . ." He makes an odd gesture with his hand and utters, "Live long and prosper."

After days of searching in the desert, you come across the great pryamid of Tutankham. The pyramid is buried in the sand except for the apex, and it takes some digging to get to the doorway. Upon entering you find a warning, "Abandon all hope to all ye who enter here!!" Under the sign rests a tarnished old lamp. Remembering Aladdin's tale, you rub the lamp and a genie appears, saying, "Wrongo!", whereupon the genie vanishes. Looking at the now shiny lamp you see, "In case of death, tap lamp." You tap the lamp and the genie reappears and says, "In case of emergency stupid!!"

You enter the doorway. Walking down the corridor, you hear a crash behind you. The door behind you has sealed you in forever. You light your lantern and see an archway that fills with white smoke and a deadly cobra emerges. You shoot it quickly, but another takes its place. And another and another and another. Seeing you are getting quickly outnumbered, you run East toward the treasure. You see a corridor that has many doorways ahead, so you dash into it. A thing that looks like a bird comes toward you from the south. You aim and... I hate this gun.

You move to the East. The bird is West of you, so now you like this gun. Where do you go next? You see a white archway whose interior is pure black and enter. What have you got to

TUTANKHAM COIN-OP

lose? You feel weird for a moment and...BINGO!!.. you are teleported to the south side of the room and promptly ejected out of the south arch. Oh no, there are snakes and birds and things that look like flying potatoes all around me. Oh well, all that can happen is the genie will strike me down or tell one of his awful jokes. Here goes. Tap.

* * * BOOM!!!!* * *

Wow!! What was that!! Every living thing but you is wiped out in a brilliant flash of light! Heck, with a lamp like this you don't need a gun. Tap. "Sorry, only one to a customer!" Feet, run like you've never run before! You run and run until you find a massive wooden door on the east wall. You try to push, pull, kick, and scream "Open sesame" but the door is hopelessly locked. You run back, firing in both East and West directions at all times, and find the key. You run back to the door and shove the key in the lock. The door opens. It's the Map room, complete with map.

The second room is certainly worse than the first. There are more critters that want to invite you to be dinner and more North-South passages into which you can't fire. The room also is divided in two, one half with passage and corners and the other with nothing at all. You get a key and enter. You can get by the empty room by running to the East and shooting constantly to the West.

The door opens to a chamber filled with dragons and faster moving monsters than previously encountered. You fight bravely, but they get you and rip you to shreds. You feel light-headed as you are flying in a black void. A voice says "Now you did it. I'll have to revive you, and while I'm at it, I'll recharge your lamp for you.

Where is my orange smoke?

* * * POOF* * *

You emerge from the orange cloud gagging and choking and resume the battle.

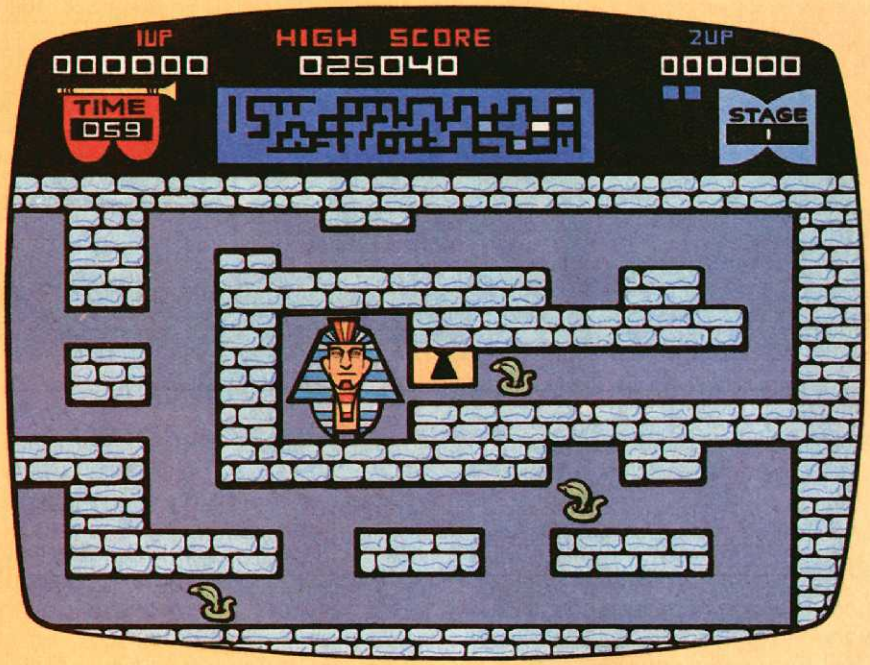
The fourth chamber has monsters that defy belief: blue/red dragons, multi-colored swirls and other wackos that make this maze a grueling test. A strategy based upon taking your time will keep you away from death's door and onward to the treasure. You now insert the last key into the fourth door and inside you find. . .

The Golden Death Mask of Tutankham

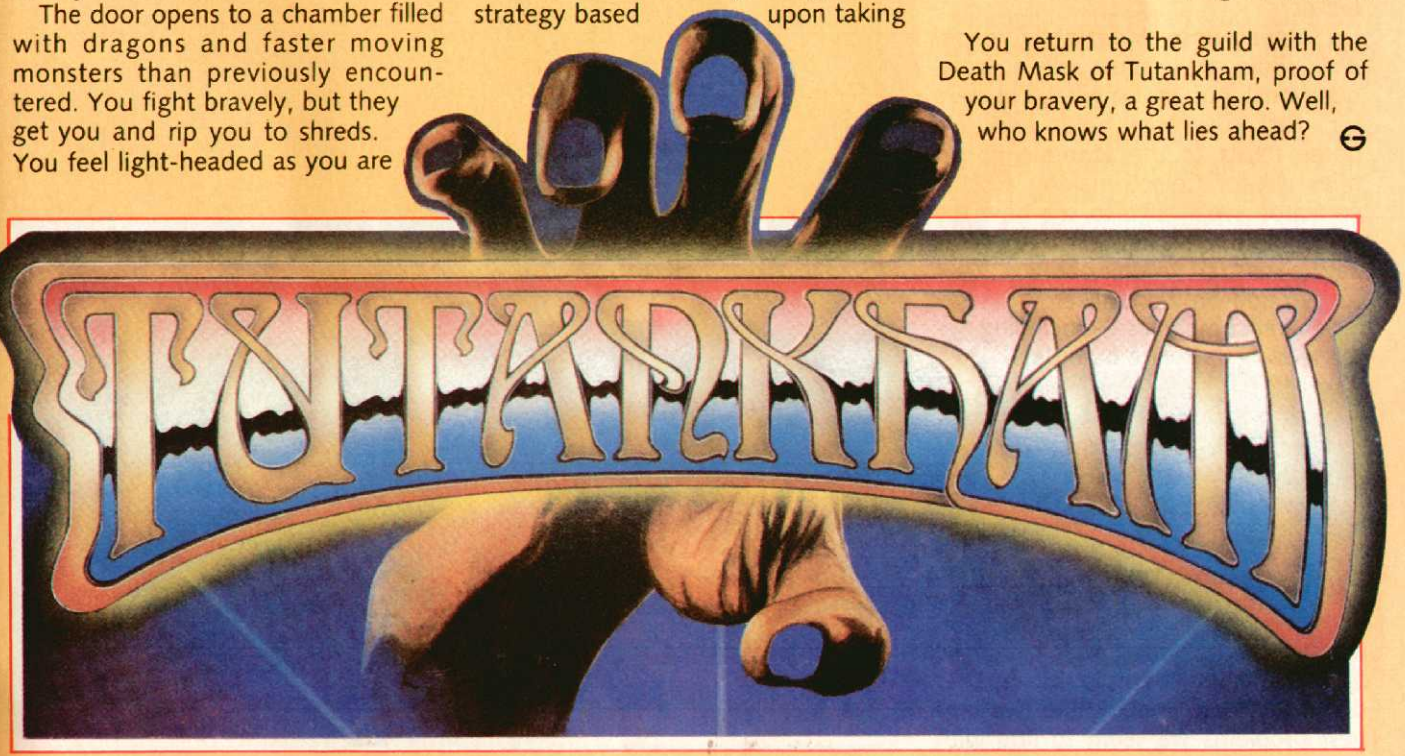
Your quest is over. You look straight up and see daylight and a rope that comes down from the hole. The rope has a message tied to it:

I think you should climb this.
Signed,
King Tutankham

You return to the guild with the Death Mask of Tutankham, proof of your bravery, a great hero. Well, who knows what lies ahead? G



TUTANKHAM PLAYFIELD



By THE GAME DOCTOR

Just got back from a luxurious video fishing trip with several other medical acquaintances, and it sure did wonders for the old doc's health. Why, I feel forty years younger — so if this column reads like it was written by a 10-year old, you'll understand.

Heh heh. Yep, the old Doc is feeling his oats. So let's prime the pump with our lead-off question this month.

Q: *I just purchased a ColecoVision video arcade system. Can Coleco make cartridges such as* **Pac-Man, Defender** *and* **Galaxian** *or does Atari hold the sole rights to them? Is Coleco planning an emulator for the 5200? Are any companies planning on making compatible cartridges for the ColecoVision unit? Finally, in your opinion, which third-wave system is better?*

(Stephen Rose, Montreal, Canada)

A: Boy, you sure ask a lotta' questions! But that's what I'm here for. First off, Atari holds exclusive home rights to the aforementioned titles. As for Coleco making a 5200 emulator, we'll have to see how the 2600 peripheral stands up in court before we start talking about further add-on work-alikes.

Several companies — including the leading software manufacturers in the field — have leaped at the opportunity to create ColecoVision-compatible games, so watch for them about the middle of '83.

Your last question is, of course, the roughest. The ColecoVision and 5200 are both, to an extent, unproven. Coleco has, however, released their emulator and the 5200 adapter seems a bit further down the road. Frankly, the two biggest problems we seem to find with the 5200 is the lack of compatibility with other Atari-produced systems! The joysticks are eccentric to the extreme — you'll either love 'em or hate 'em, but you won't ever feel indifferent.

Perhaps even more significantly, however, the 5200 runs on an RF switch that is compatible with *no other* existing system. Every other programmable and computer system uses a standardized RF except the 5200.

If you're shopping around for your first videogame, however, give the 5200 a once-over — especially

Expansion Module #2 for the ColecoVision is the Turbo steering wheel with gas pedal. One of the Coleco joysticks is employed to shift gears

gamers who aren't looking to get into personal computers. Both systems have their pluses and minuses. The ColecoVision joysticks are rather troublesome, but they are largely interchangeable with standard VCS-compatible type controllers. However, — before you pop for that deluxe controller to use with your Coleco system, make sure that all nine of the input sockets are *wired*, since many of the VCS controllers only partially wire the sockets, rendering them useless on other systems.

Both the Atari 400 and 800 can be "daisy-chained" to link cassette and disk

Q: *I've been thinking about buying an Atari 400 and later on I may want to purchase an 810 disc drive. I've read that you can hook up a disc drive to the 400 just as you would a 410 tape drive, but my mom says you can't. Who's right?*

(Drew Gillow, address unknown)

A: You're right, Drew, as long as you've got a new 16K system. Still, most games on disk require 32K, so an upgrade board would be your best bet.

By the way, it's also possible to "daisy chain" the 410 and 810 to the 400 and transfer your programs on tape to disc in a matter of minutes. It's all part of the computer hobby — just as with any other pastime — the enthusiast is always looking to trade up to better and faster, *and* slicker versions of whatever it is you've got.

Q: *I was wondering if you know of any home videogame systems or any home computers making versions of* **Tempest, Robotron, Dig-Dug** *or* **Wizard of Wor?**

(Chuck Moore, Portsmouth, OH)

A: *Tempest* and *Robotron* are not yet available, though somewhat similar games can be had at this time. **Tubeway II** from Datamost has a lot of the *Tempest* feel without ripping off the original, and the doc has already seen a programmable version of a **Robotron**-like game in development.

TEMPEST

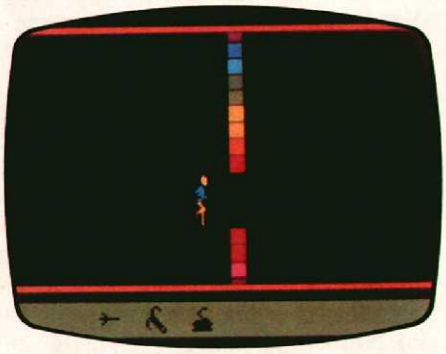
Dig-Dug, meanwhile, should be available from Atari fairly soon and *Wizard of Wor* is available in no less than *three* versions. For VCS owners, CBS Videogames has a good version, while Astrocade has a virtual duplicate of the original under the title **The Incredible Wizard**, designed by Bob Ogdon. The ultimate version of it, however, is available on disk for the Atari computers from Rocklan. This one is, indeed, like taking a coin-op home.

You will also want to investigate the CBS and Rocklan versions of **Gorf.**

Q&A QUICKIES: Jeff Dotson wants to know about the 5200 tracball, whether it will be interchangeable with the joystick and what the price on the VCS emulator will be. Questions we got, answers. . .not so many. Atari is continuing to release contradictory information regarding the 5200. The tracball isn't ready and we have no idea when it will be. The emulator isn't ready and the cost on that is still way up in the air. Currently, the 5200 is at the crossroads. In the very near future, we'll have a much better idea of where the system stands. Right now there's the 5200 and a quartet of old game titles slightly modified from the computer program versions. The doctor's crystal ball is still cloudy on this one.

Again on the 5200, Robert Ague wonders if a keyboard will be available. However, since the 5200 is essentially the Atari 400 *without* a keyboard — as Atari's marketing seems to feel the public isn't ready for computers yet — it seems doubtful that they would go through all that trouble to merely recreate the 400 in a clever plastic disguise. . .By the way, Robert, regarding your back problem: I usually have a policy against giving free medical advice, but your com-

Continued on page 108



SWORDQUEST

It's Turtle-Saving Time!

By JOYCE WORLEY

TURTLES

Entex/$50

Old timers used to say that when a turtle bites, he won't open his mouth until it thunders. I'm not sure about that, but I do know that once you get a taste of **Turtles**, the hot new stand-alone from Entex, you won't be willing to turn it loose for at least that long. In fact, I don't think a thunderstorm would pry most gamers from this delightful diversion!

Almost a year ago, Nick Underhill, vice president of Entex, said that the increasing popularity of arcade games was forcing hand-held manufacturers to be more innovative. He said players were becoming increasingly sophisticated, and gave this as the reason for the public demand for more challenging game play.

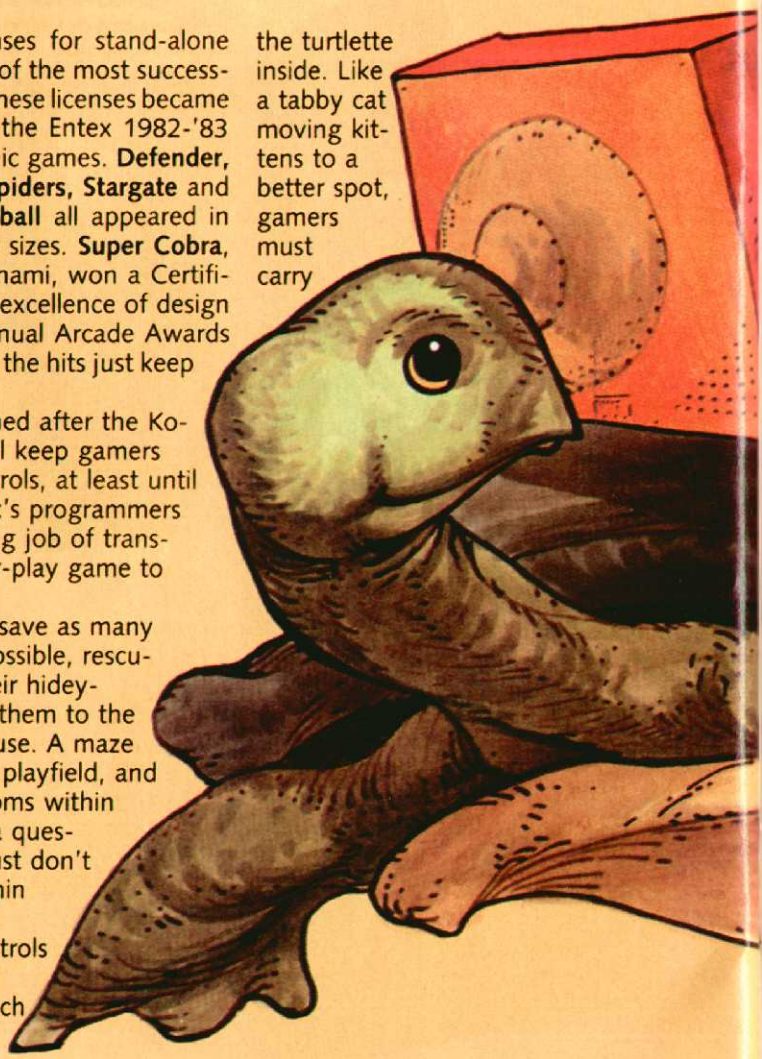
Entex, like many other manufacturers of hand-held electronic games, is no stranger to arcade-style action. In 1981, Entex's **Space Invaders** was a forerunner of current state-of-the-art stand-alone games. The unit still looks and plays well in 1983, although technology has advanced far beyond the 1980-'81 level.

Perhaps it was the success of *Space Invaders* that sent Entex back to the arcades for fresher themes for its line of hand-held games. Whatever the philosophy behind the move, Entex has secured licenses for stand-alone versions of some of the most successful arcade titles. These licenses became the backbone of the Entex 1982-'83 library of electronic games. **Defender, Crazy Climber, Spiders, Stargate** and **Black Knight Pinball** all appeared in elegant table-top sizes. **Super Cobra**, licensed from Konami, won a Certificate of Merit for excellence of design in the Fourth Annual Arcade Awards competition. And the hits just keep on coming!

Turtles, patterned after the Konami coin-op, will keep gamers glued to the controls, at least until it thunders. Entex's programmers did an outstanding job of translating the pay-for-play game to miniature size.

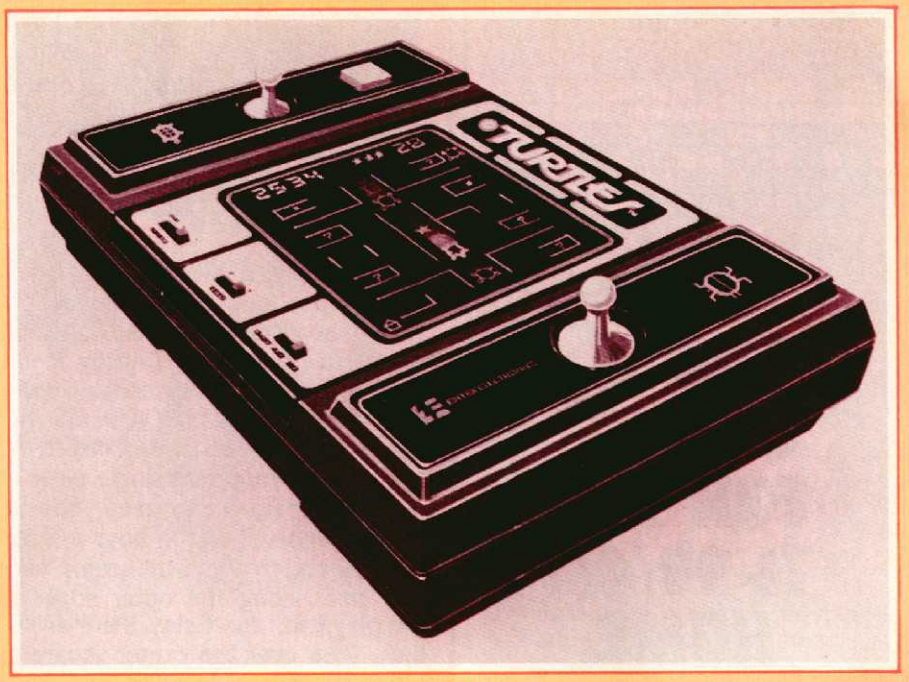
Arcaders must save as many baby turtles as possible, rescuing them fom their hidey-holes and taking them to the turtles' safety house. A maze occupies the tiny playfield, and eight mystery rooms within it are filled with a question mark. You just don't know what's within until you enter.

The gamer controls the mother turtle who goes into each room to pick up the turtlette inside. Like a tabby cat moving kittens to a better spot, gamers must carry



the turtlette to a safety house appearing in one corner of the screen. But all is not cabbage leaves and strawberries for the little reptiles. Two beetles pursue the turtle around the course. This pair of meanies are joined by two more as the game progresses, because there are two mystery rooms containing beetles instead of turtlettes. Once released, they also take up the chase.

The turtle has a defensive weapon. "Bug bombs" temporarily immobilize attacking beetles. Only one bomb can be on-screen at a time. The player has three bombs when the game starts, but gains additional ones by passing over the flashing bonus square in the center of the playfield. When all eight rooms are open, a new maze appears with eight more. There are a variety of ways to score. Gamers get 20 points for rescuing a turtlette from a mystery square, and another 30 points for dropping it off at a safety house. Freezing an attacking beetle with a bomb is good for 20 points. Gamers also get 10 points as compensation when a turtle is captured by a beetle — but we don't recommend this as a point-gaining strategy! You start with four turtles, and gain an additional one for scoring 1,000 points. A cheery melody plays as the on-screen turtle races through the maze. Enter a mystery room containing a turtlette and hear a happy tune. Going into a room with a beetle replaces the music with a grinding sound.



TURTLES

Various controls let the gamer choose normal or mute play and pick between two skill levels. A separate control speeds up or slows the action within each skill level, to increase or decrease the difficulty. Play singly or head-to-head with another gamer. In two-player mode, one person mans the turtle and the other controls the movement of one of the beetles.

This is a fast game even at its simplest setting. The beetles zip around the screen at a furious pace, and the turtle is hard pushed to stay ahead. It's better to outthink them, rather than trying to outrun the beetles. Since they're programmed for pursuit, arcaders can sometimes entice all the insects to one side of the unit, then race over to the other side to pick up or drop off his precious cargo of lethal bug bombs. A little advance planning on room raids is also a big help. There's always a beetle in one of the corner rooms, and another in a side room. If you should stumble on a beetle in a corner room, where the maze makes a straight getaway more difficult, escape can be very hard. Therefore, it makes sense to rescue the baby turtles from side rooms first, since these are the easiest to flee when you hit

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the room with a beetle.

Only one bug bomb can be on-screen at a time, so plan carefully where to drop them. Directly in the path of an oncoming monster is the best place, but putting a bomb in a corner is certain to trap an insect.

The most important single piece of strategic advice is to keep moving. Don't stand still or the bugs will get you. Although the way seems wide and clear along the outer edges of the playfield, don't stay there all the time. Pass over the center square as often as practical to build up a good supply of bug bombs.

Turtles is one of the best arcade translations we've seen so far this year. The graphics are bright and easy to see. The turtle is an appealing little creature, and the beetles are angry red blobs with tiny black eyes. The joystick controls are smooth and responsive. It's simple to operate, easy to understand, and completely appealing!

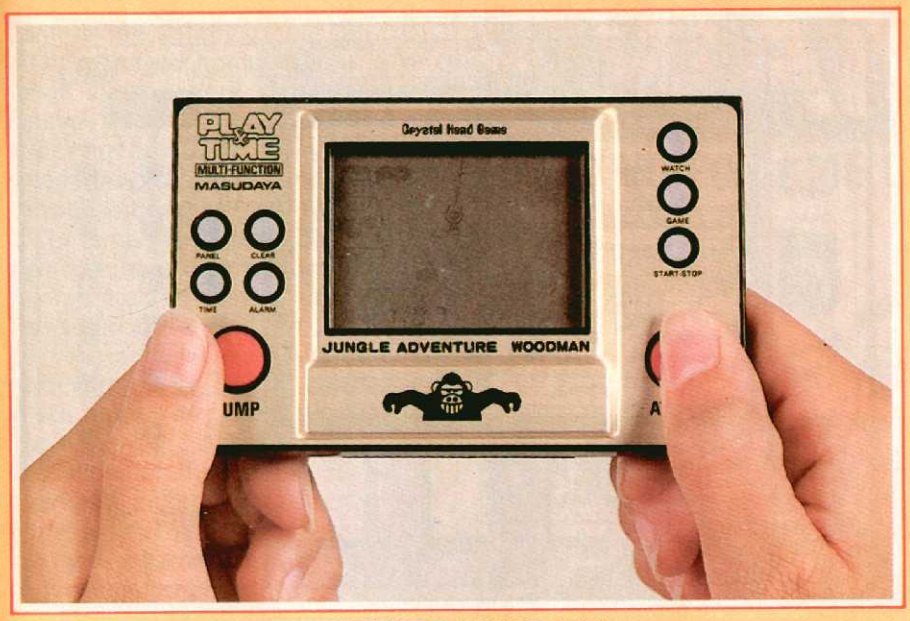
JUNGLE ADVENTURE-WOODMAN & SAMURAI VS. NINJA

Thumb Games/Masudaya Corp./$42.95

Palm-sized games hit the United States in a big way in 1982. Some mighty midgets did reach market before that date, of course. Game-playing wristwatches and calculators were introduced in the late 1970's. This was closely followed by space-age pocket watch-games, early on in the 1980's. Now when someone says he has time on his hands, he may just mean one of the hand-held marvels that not only tell the hour but also provides a few minutes of entertainment while you're waiting for time to pass.

Most of the units are similar in design. They measure roughly 2½-by 4-in. and slide neatly into a shirt pocket. Designated "Play & Time", or "Time & Fun", or "Game & Watch" by various manufacturers, they can be found in stores everywhere in the country for prices ranging from $20 to $50, according to the specific capability of each.

Thumb Power Games went to Masudaya Corp. for its quality line of palm games to be distributed in this country. These games are excellent representatives of this class of gaming



JUNGLE ADVENTURE WOODMAN

device that incorporates several advanced features.

Jungle Adventure-Woodman is a two-game unit with watch and alarm functions. The melody alarm plays "Yesterday" — a nice way to be brought back to consciousness. The watch provides AM and PM marks, and a 30-minute stop watch with lap counting system. An energy-saving function blots out the screen display. when not in use to save batteries.

In *Jungle Adventure*, the gamer must help the on-screen hero save a fair maiden from the ferocious gorilla. The boy must jump from a tree to a swinging vine. An alligator sometimes appears, but if he hits the serpent in the head, the beast moves off. As the boy swings toward the gorilla, the ape tries to block him with its left arm. Hit the ape's arm, then jump to where the lady waits. Take her hand, then leap on the vine and swing back to the tree and safety. Score five points each time you hit the alligator or gorilla, 20 points for reaching the girl, and another 50 points if you can get back to the tree with her. Lose 10 points each time you fall. The game ends after three minutes, but I guarantee you'll want to try another round; it's that cute!

The second game is *Woodman*. Try to cut as many trees as possible while avoiding a lion's attack. When the lion attempts to kill the woodman, he must climb the tree to escape. This is a simple game, not too difficult. Each hack at the tree scores five points, and you earn 50 points for felling it. Every attack by the lion costs the gamer 10 points.

The animation in both games is a little rough, consisting of rather crude, black and white drawings set against the backdrop of a silvery LCD screen. But the play-action is very appealing, especially in the *Jungle Adventure* scenario, and the unit gives lots of entertainment when it's not busy telling the correct time.

Samurai vs. Ninja is an accurate timepiece that will wake you up for breakfast. While you're waiting for the bacon to fry, have a look at its really unusual two-level game, which utilizes a dual color screen system. The samurai is in a garden with the princess. He maneuvers right and left, trying to attack the Ninja with his spear.

Stab the Ninja and knock him down for one point. If you accidently strike the princess, you lose three seconds of game time. Accumulate 30 points, and the next playscreen appears. The Ninja disappears behind the ceiling, and the Samurai must try to spear him, guessing where to attack. If successful, the Ninja falls from the ceiling and you score 10 points. Fail and the Ninja moves to the left of the ceiling, where he's worth only five points, *if* you can strike him down. Then the screen returns to game #1. Continue moving from the garden to the inside of the building and back again until nine rounds are completed, or the total score reaches 999, whereupon the game ends.

The line drawings in this game are very fine and the introduction of a tiny amount of color to the LCD screen is a welcome innovation. In game #1, the princess is red, and all other game components are black. Game #2 is

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done entirely in red line drawings against the white LCD screen.

The game's unusually diverting. Not only will you have fun, but think what a kick it is to whip out one of these classy attention-getters when someone asks you for the time!

BB-10 BASEBALL GAME CALCULATOR/CLOCK

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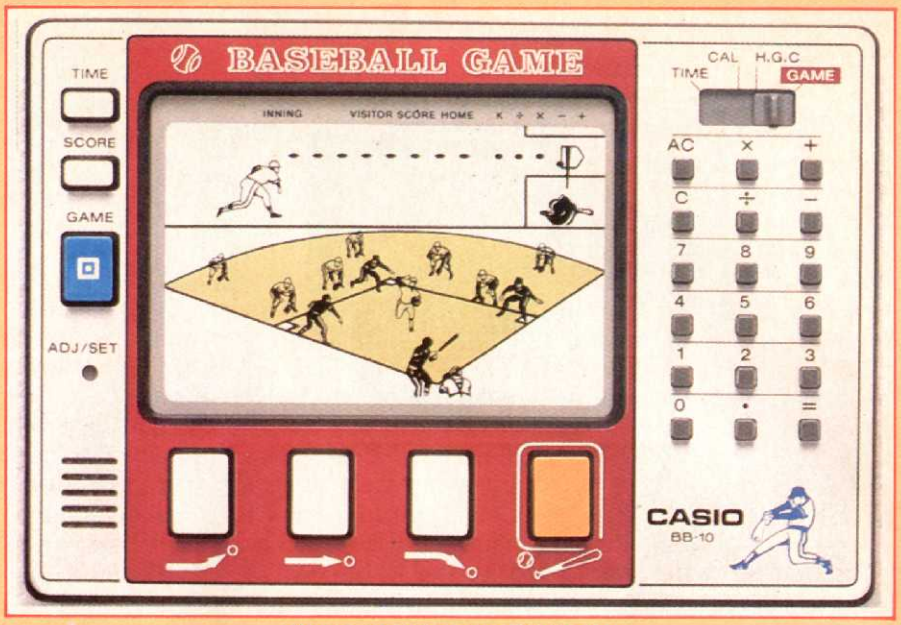
It's spring! The weather is getting better and summer is on the way. The teams are in the ballparks, and across the land, the cry of "play ball" wafts on the gentle seasonal breezes.

Sitting in study hall, doing tomorrow's algebra assignment, the ballpark may seem a thousand miles away. But Casio has a way to bring the action closer to home. The "Casio BB-10 Baseball Game" is a combination calculator/game/clock that makes a Stan Musial out of anyone.



CASIO'S CALCULATOR/BASEBALL GAME

The baseball game calculator is wafer-thin to fit neatly into a shirt pocket. The full-function calculator has eight-digit capacity and full floating decimal point. The buttons are small but easy to use, since each one's function is very clearly marked. After you complete that math assignment, switch to the time mode to see how many minutes are left in the study period. A large clear readout gives the hour, minute and second. Then, when all your homework is finished, turn to the game display and see this unit really sparkle!

The usable playscreen measures 1¼-by 2-in. — a large playfield as vest-pocket games go. The arcader

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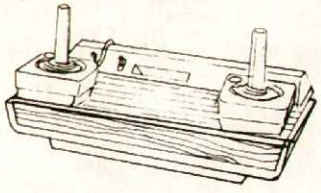

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READERS REPLAY

Continued from page 24

Ed: Last issue, the Intellivisionaries were up in arms, this time our O² partisans are unhappy with the way **EG** *divides up our coverage.*

Here's the score: The reader poll in the back of each issue of **EG** *is our prime pipeline to our readers. It tells how many of you own which systems, how many plan to buy what software and how interested you are in reading about the different stand-alone, programmable, computer and coin-op games. Actually, despite its long pedigree, the O² has not made as deep inroads into electronic gaming as N.A.P., its parent company, had hoped it would. There just aren't enough O² owners out there to merit more coverage than* **EG** *currently provides. Remember, each new Odyssey release is reviewed, the system has its own section ("Odyssey Outlook") in "EG Hotline" and new developments, such as the voice module (and software) and the Master Strategy series get heavy coverage.*

The bottom line, John, is that the quality of the games do not always determine the amount of coverage they receive. Our editorial pages must be skewered in the directions that interest most of our readers. The less popular systems also get their due — watch for our upcoming look at the "Astrocade Underground", the network of independent programmers who created their own games when Bally abandoned the Professional Arcade System — but, as the Kinks once remarked, in a song, you have to "give the people what they want."

A SWIFTY KICK

Ordinarily we would not comment on a review of one of our products, but your review of **Haunted Hill** in the November **EG** was so riddled with factual inaccuracies that we feel compelled to respond.

Haunted Hill, available for the Atari 400/800 computers is written in machine language, and not BASIC, as you concluded. The BASIC cartridge is required, in the disk version only, for proprietary (protection) purposes. Moreover, the game runs in 16K, not 32K as you state, and is one of the few games to do so in both cassette and disk versions.

Peter Doret
V.P., Swifty Software

Ed: Sorry about the 32K error — we're

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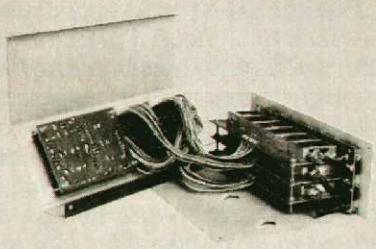

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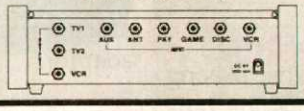

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so used to the 16K cassette/32K disk format that it sometime slips in against our best efforts. We also regret giving the impression that Jacknow — or "LeeJack", the only name by which we've ever known him — is running the show by himself. He now apparently has built Swifty into a growing enterprise.

On the question of Haunted Hill, however. . .frankly, Peter, since my BASIC cartridge was being employed in the running of the program, I looked to it as a natural excuse by way of explaining the horrendous play action. What you're telling us, therefore, is that the worst play action we've ever seen on a modern piece of computer software was accomplished with assembly language?! I suggest this otherwise laudatory game be reworked by a programmer with at least a modicum of knowledge regarding on-screen character movement and perhaps then re-release it. Until then, it's just bad programming without any excuse.

Sorry, Peter, but we have to call them as we see them.

INSIDE TRON

My friend told me that while playing Midway's **Tron,** he selected the tank maze and there were no tanks — only Recognizers. I also heard that in the I/O Tower contest, a Solar Sailor flies overhead. Could you confirm or deny this — and perhaps publish a photo?

Lance Layson
Calhous, GA

Ed: Your friend is obviously a very good player who has penetrated the deeper, darker secrets of the Midway masterpiece. As for photos — why spoil the thrill of seeing it for yourself? C'mon, Lance, you can make that Solar Sailor take wing!

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: A couple of items got by us last time. **Gorf**, by CBS Videogames, was a Certificate of Merit winner in the Best Science Fiction category and was inadvertently left off the list of winners.

There was also a slip-up in the taglines given to several of the products in January's "Reader Replay." For those who were confused by this mistake, we hereby present the Intellivoice Speech Synthesis Unit in all its full-color glory.

A quick way to correct the situation, however, is to switch the identification over both the ColecoVision and Intellivoice units in our January issue, and you'll have everything in order.

The final problem concerns a winner in the Computer Division of an Honorable Mention — **Air Strike**. The game was incorrectly credited to "London" Software, which is another company altogether. The real producer was English Software.

Letters are just about our favorite thing here at **EG**, so keep 'em flying. Even though it's impossible to answer individual letters — and still put out a monthly, full-color magazine — we read everything that comes through our door in the mail sack and appreciate it all — pro and con.

Who loves you? **EG** loves ya!

Q&A

Continued from page 99

plaint about a bad back just set me off. Sit up straight! Expect my bill in the mail. . .Lisa Savignano of Nanuet, NY, has heard that the **Swordquest** series can be played on the ColecoVision and 5200. As far as the doctor knows, there is no 5200 version of the *Swordquest* yet available, though it can be played through the ColecoVision 2600 adaptor. . . .

Q: *I'm going to be 12 in February and am going to get a game system as a present. With all the new systems out, I'm confused about which one to buy. I have considered a ColecoVision, but you know how moms can be; she wants me to get a VIC-20 because it has a computer keyboard and more educational games, but I'm still stuck on ColecoVision. Any suggestions?*

(Summer C. Cook, Foster, WV)

A: Okay, Summer, if a super game machine (with a soon-to-be-available keyboard) is what you want, the ColecoVision wins hands down. The VIC-20 is truly an attractively priced computer, but does *not* have a lot of internal power or memory.

As I see it, the basic decision is this; do you want a game machine that allows you to program a little, or a computer that'll play games as well as perform more utilitarian functions.

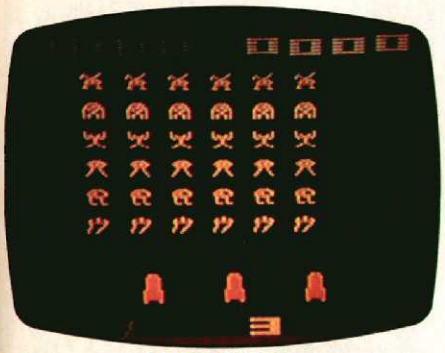
As a 12-year old, you might prefer to look at a good, upgradeable computer. Go to a computer retailer and get some hands-on experience with the Atari, Commodore and other systems. Check out the available software — a computer with all the memory in the world isn't going to be of much use if there are no programs — entertainment or otherwise — to

use with it. The software support network is very strong with the Apple II and Atari computers and is just beginning to blossom with the VIC.

Q: *If Atari can put 27 games on one cartridge, why can't the company make one game with more than four different playfields like* **Gorf** *or* **Venture**?

(Rich Benton, Atlanta, GA)

A: Whoa, there, Rich, hold those computer-driven horses a gosh-darn minute! First off, Atari VCS games have boasted *way* more than 27 games — why, the original **Space Invaders** for the 2600 had over a hundred if my failing memory serves.



SPACE INVADERS

What we are talking about here, however, is the difference between games and game *variations*. When a cartridge is released with a multitude of play options such as (invisible invaders, shifting invaders, invaders dressed formally and informally, ad infinitum) we are talking only about subtle changes in a stable playfield. Games such as **Gorf** and **Venture** require totally *different* playfields for each of their multi-scenarios. Each such scenario requires considerable computing power and the 2600 just doesn't have the juice to generate 27 totally varied fields at this time.

The distinction may seem subtle, but it isn't — not by a long shot.

Q: *In terms of computers, I've heard that you can store your programs on ordinary audio-tape cassettes. By saying "ordinary tape cassettes", do they mean the same kind of cassettes that music is recorded on?*

(Mark Cowan, Cortez, CO)

A: They do, indeed, Mark. Computer code can be inscribed onto audio tape and then loaded via a tape drive into the computer, which then puts the program on line. The downside to tape-loading is time — anywhere from several minutes to

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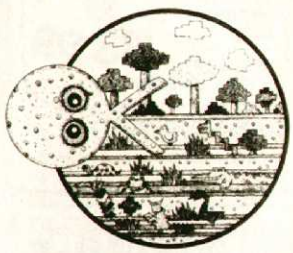

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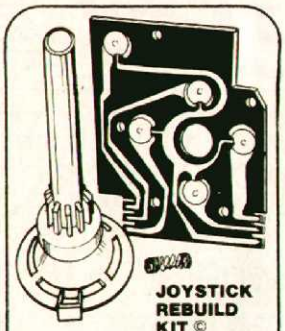

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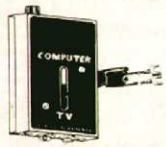

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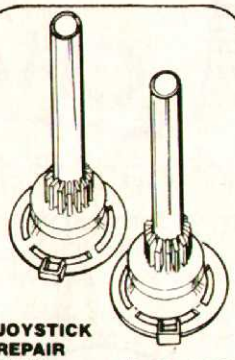

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what seems like hours for longer programs.

Empire of the Overmind (Avalon-Hill), which was originally available only on cassette, inspired jokes about starting the loading procedure, taking a bath, having dinner, catching a play — in another city — and bicycling home just in time for the load to complete — with an error message indicated on the second line.

Disc drives input the code into the memory banks much more swiftly and cartridges are even faster still, and, naturally, require no peripherals other than an input slot located somewhere on the console.

The up-side to cassette programs? They're cheap, almost everyone has a player and they open up the world of program storage to the novice computerist.

LAST QUACKS FROM THE GAME QUACKER: In the wake of **EG's** tremendous success, we have seen scores of imitators taking to the newsstand shelves, boasting ratings on games that not only haven't been released, but aren't even designed yet! At a recent press gathering, the game croaker showed Mike Katz, head honcho on the ColecoVision account, all about some of the reviews that have been appearing in our competitors' pages. Mike was, to put it mildly, floored. "*I* haven't even seen *that* one yet!" he told me as he scanned the page. "And that one isn't ready yet, either!"

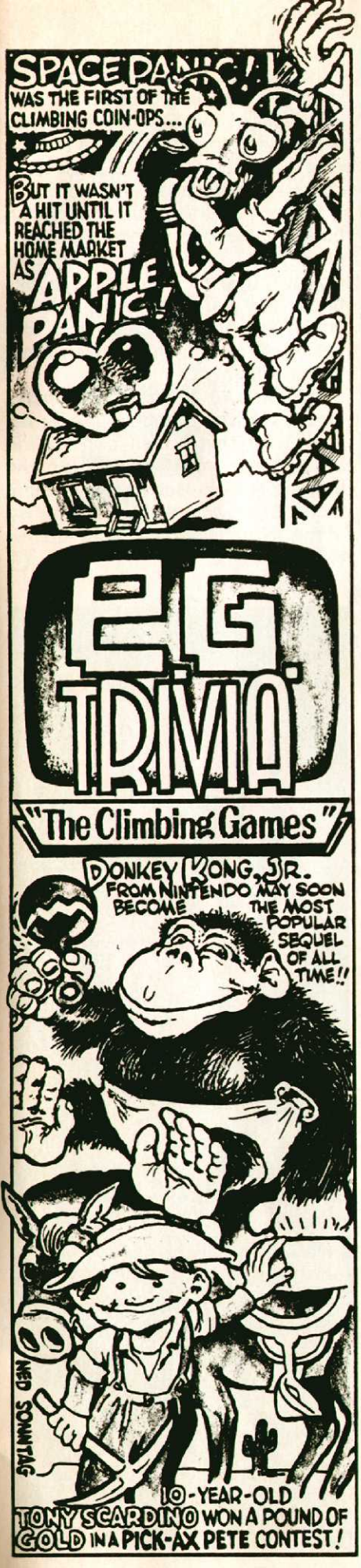
When game magazines are reviewing games before they're designed, we feel the need to inform our readers to watch out. Remember your first and best source of gaming info: **EG.** We may not be able to fit in every game, but what we *do* review, we've *played.*

And that's your old friend, the Game Doctor (in Latin, by the way, that's "Gamus Doctorus", but why get high-and-mighty, right? See you next month — oil those joysticks and keep on gaming!

STAND-ALONE SCENE

Continued from page 103

town computer-controlled boys of summer. The upper third of the display lets you pick the pitch. Using an aiming method originally introduced in video bowling games, a cursor travels vertically up and down in front of the pitcher. Wind up and throw to the left or right of the plate, or aim one right down the pipe. You can use one of



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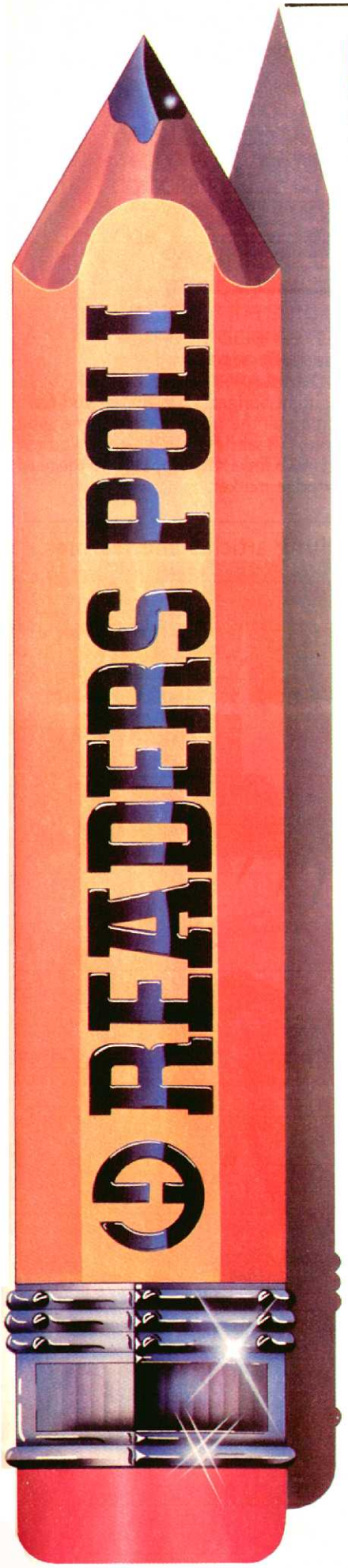
three pitch control buttons to curve it outside, inside, or throw a fast ball. The longer the key is depressed, up to a maximum of two seconds, the faster the speed of the ball. Depress the key longer than that, and the pitch turns careless and becomes easier to hit.

Use of the aiming cursor and pitch buttons in different combinations produces nine kinds of throws. Batters vary with respect to batting eye, hitting power and batting skill, depending on the positions in the lineup, and pitches should be chosen with these strengths in mind.

The Casio BB-10 offers a reasonably pleasant pitching and hitting game. The clever split screen displays the action convincingly, and the use of the bowling-style cursor in the pitching sequence provides enough of a variety of throws to hold the gamer's interest for a *long* time.

APRIL FOOL!

Strikes are almost as certain in our society as death and taxes. Some Americans have become pretty fatalistic concerning walkouts by the folks who cart the garbage, land the airplanes and drive the railroads. This month's cover shows that things could get even worse. . .the videogame characters could strike. Fortunately, this special cover in celebration of April Fools Day is the closest we're likely to come to such a calamity.



Interaction between the readers and editors of **Electronic Games** helps make this a better magazine. The more we here at **EG** know about who you are and what you want to read, the better we can satisfy your needs and desires. That's why we run a Reader Poll in every single issue of this magazine. Rest assured that even though we protect the anonymity of every respondent to our survey, the editor personally reads each and every ballot received. And of course, this is also your ballot for casting your vote for the most popular videogames, computer game programs and coin-op arcade machines.

Please return this poll sheet—or a photocopy, if you prefer to keep your **Electronic Games** in perfect condition—to: **Electronic Games**, 235 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10003.

SEX AND AGE:

☐ Male ☐ Female Age _____

MARITAL STATUS:

☐ Single ☐ Married

HOUSEHOLD INCOME:

☐ Under $5000 ☐ $5000-9999
☐ $10,000- 14,999
☐ $15,000- 19,999
☐ $20,000- 24,999 ☐ $25,000+

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD: _____

AGES:

☐ Under 2 ☐ 3-5
☐ 6-11 ☐ 12-17

Please check off the equipment which you own or plan to buy within the next 12 months:

	Own	Plan to Buy
Atari VCS	____	____
Intellivision	____	____
ColecoVision	____	____
Odyssey²	____	____
Atari 5200	____	____
Other Videogame System	____	____
VIC-20	____	____
Atari 400/800	____	____
IBM Personal Computer	____	____
Apple II	____	____
Other Microcomputer	____	____
Video Cassette Recorder	____	____
Videodisc Player	____	____
Giant Screen Television	____	____
Stereo System	____	____

How many hours per week do you spend playing various electronic games:

☐ Less than 2 hours ☐ 2-5 hours ☐ 6-10 hours ☐ More than 10 hours

How much do you spend per week on electronic games:

☐ Under $2 ☐ $2-5 ☐ $6-10 ☐ Over $10

How many people, besides yourself will read this issue of Electronic Games:

_____

My favorite videogame cartridges are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My favorite microcomputer games are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My favorite coin-op games are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

COMING NEXT IN electronic GAMES

THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO THE "CUTE" GAMES

A year ago, the electronic gaming field was dominated by the sound of on-screen explosions. Now thanks to games like **Freeway** and **Pac-Man**, charming visuals and lilting sound effects are all the rage. This magazine-within-a-magazine will help separate the games that only *look* good from the ones that play good, too!

EG'S SECOND ANNUAL SPRING GAMING PREVIEW

Even in a hobby in which the word "new" is taken for granted, 1983 is shaping up as a year marked by unparalleled excitement and product innovation. Here's your chance to find out now about the videogames, computer progams, and stand-alones everyone will be playing in the coming months.

ARCADING ON THE RIVER

'Way down yonder in New Orleans, one of the most popular gaming parlors floats majestically down the Mississippi. Hop on board for a first class tour!

CONFESSIONS OF AN ARCADE TECHNICIAN

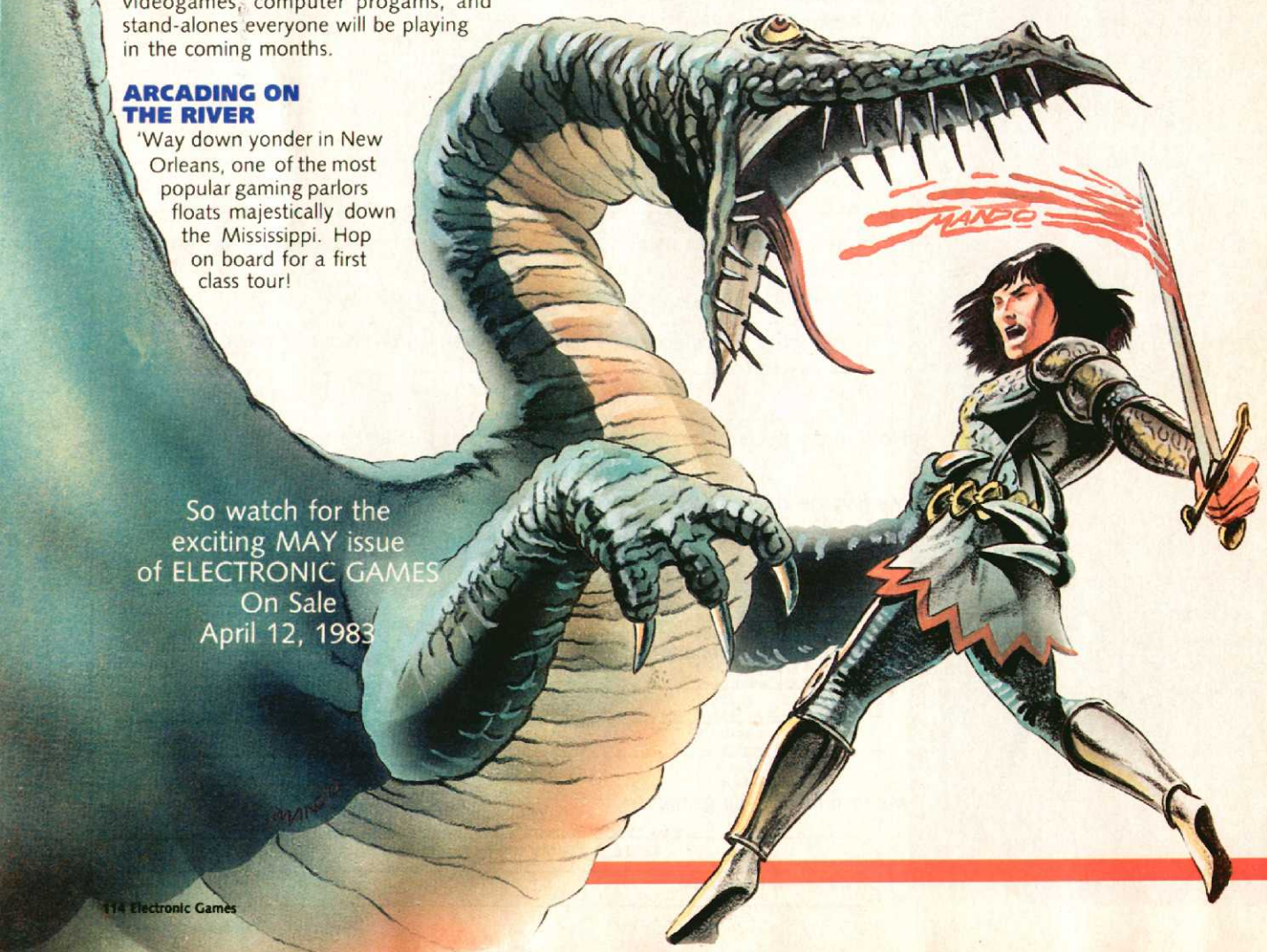
What kind of man repairs **Donkey Kong**? One of our enterprising reporters spent a few days riding shotgun for a top arcade techie to get the fascinating behind-the-scenes story.

SECOND-HAND VIDEOGAMES, ANYONE?

If a tight budget is preventing you from getting all the home arcade games you crave, this article will tell you how you can get more for less by dipping into the used cartridge market.

There'll be plenty of other exciting articles and features of interest to arcaders, plus these regular columns:

- ★ Passport to Adventure
- ★ Q&A
- ★ Inside Gaming
- ★ Arcade America
- ★ Computer Gaming
- ★ Programmable Parade
- ★ Switch On!
- ★ New Products
- ★ Test Lab
- ★ Readers Replay
- ★ EG Hotline
- ★ Games Library
- ★ Stand-Alone Scene
- ★ Mini-Arcade Gallery
- ★ Coin-Op Classroom
- ★ Strategy Session
- ★ Insert Coin Here
- ★ Pinball Palace



So watch for the exciting MAY issue of ELECTRONIC GAMES On Sale April 12, 1983

THERE'S NO ESCAPING THE EXCITEMENT!

The human race has met its match!

The Beebots of Bem and their Killer Bees have invaded! Conventional weapons do nothing! Nuclear weapons do nothing!

Where do we run? Where do we hide?

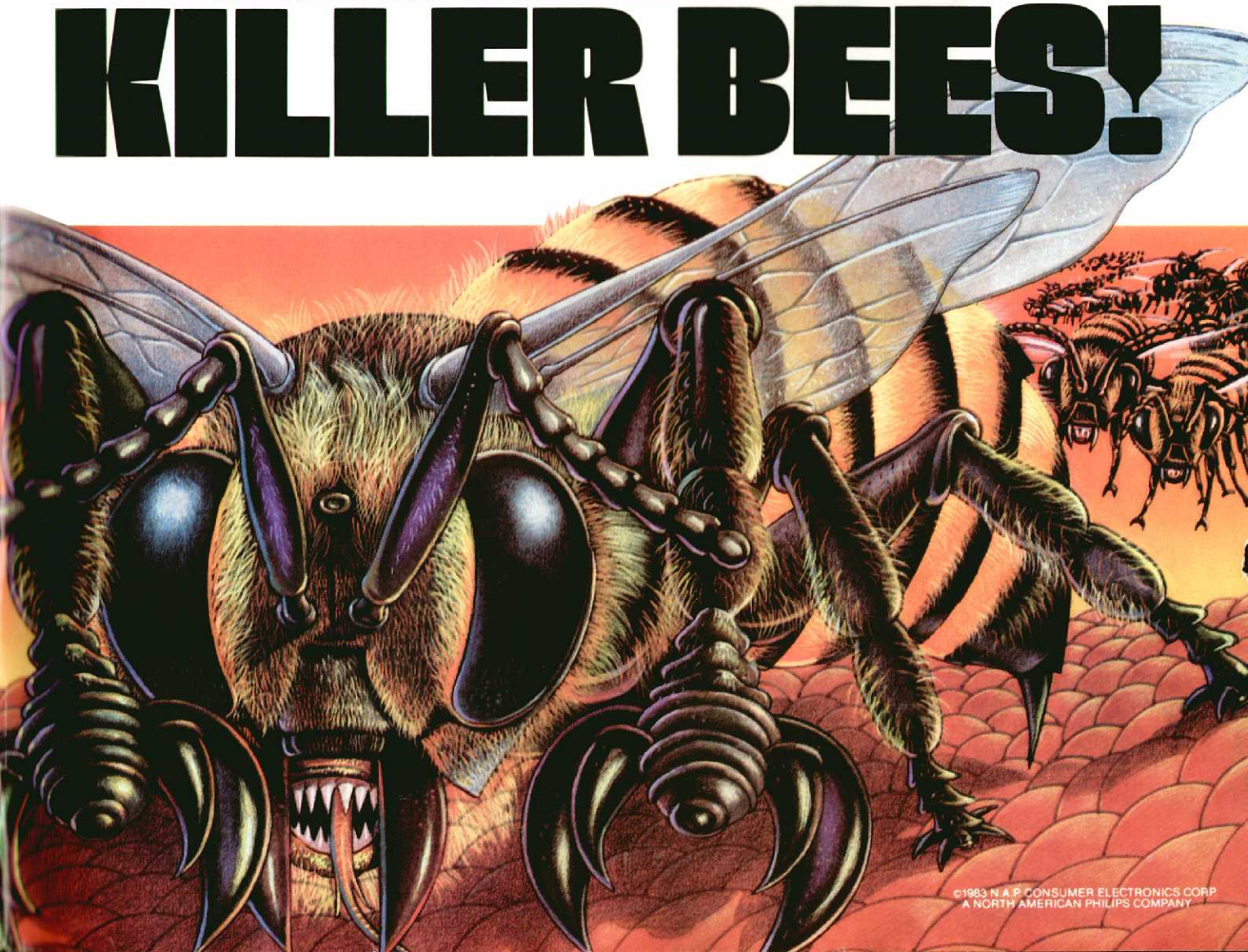
Saving the earth is in your hands!

Your only defense against the Beebots is the sting of your earth bees. Your only defense against the Killer Bees is your Rosha Ray. You have 26 different levels of challenge. Each one faster and tougher than the one before. High-level digital scoring with memory. Exciting sync-sound action when played through the Voice of Odyssey.® For one or more players—but players who can take it. The excitement is endless!

ODYSSEY

Over 52 games available.

WARNING... KILLER BEES!



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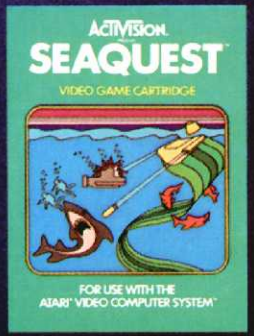
YOU'RE IN DEEP TROUBLE.

We're talking really deep trouble here. You're the captain of a deep-diving submarine, and your scuba divers are being attacked. Schools of great white sharks have a school lunch program in mind, and your divers are the main course. You've got to be fast, or your divers will be fast food.

While you've got your eyes on your divers, modern day bluebeards have their eyes on you. These pirates have subs of their own, but they want yours too. Nobody ever said being a captain was easy.

By the way, you'd better check your air supply. You may have to surface to fill your tanks.



What will your divers do then?

What will the pirates do?

What will you do?

These questions and more can only be answered with Seaquest™ for the Atari® 2600™. Another hit by Steve Cartwright for Activision.®

ACTIVISION®

WE PUT YOU IN THE GAME.

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